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DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

BY THE LATE

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PRECEPTOR TO THE INFANTS OF FRANCE, AND ARCHBISHOP-DUKE OF CAMBRAY.

A NEW TRANSLATION.

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O.J.F.C.1705.

DIALOGUES OF THE ANCIENTS.

DIALOGUE XXXIII.

CAMILLUS AND FABIUS MAXIMUS.

Honesty is the best policy.

FABIUS.

IT belongs to Minos, and the other two judges to settle our ranks, since you will not yield to me: they shall decide the matter, and I believe them just enough to prefer those great actions of the Punic war, when the commonwealth was now powerful, and admired by all distant nations, to the petty wars of infant Rome, during

which the fighting was always at the gates of the city.

CAMILLUS.

They will have no great difficulty to decide between a Roman, who was five times dictator, tho' never conſul, who triumphed four times, who deſerved the title of Second Founder of Rome, and another citizen, who did but ſpin out the time by cunning, and fly before Hannibal.

FABIUS.

I deſerved the title of Second Founder better than you: for Hannibal and the whole power of the Carthaginians, from which I delivered Rome, were an evil more formidable than the incurſion of a mob of Barbarians, which you diſperſed. You will be hard put to it, when you come to compare the taking of Veii, which was but a village, with that of the lofty and warlike Tarentum, that ſecond Lacedemon, whereof it was a colony.

CAMILLUS.

The ſiege of Veii was of greater conſequence to the Romans than that of Tarentum. One muſt not judge by the ſize of the city, but by the miſchiefs it occaſioned to Rome. Veii was then ſtronger in proportion

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tion for Rome in her infant-ſtate, than Tarentum was afterwards for Rome, that had increaſed her power by ſuch a ſeries of ſucceſs.

FABIUS.

But that petty town of Veii you were ten years in taking, the ſiege laſted as long as that of Troy: and therefore you entered Rome after that conqueſt in a triumphal car drawn by four white horſes: you muſt needs make vows too in order to obtain that mighty ſucceſs; you promiſed the gods the tithe of the booty. Upon this promiſe they enabled you to take the town; but it was no ſooner taken than you forgot your benefactors, and gave the plunder to the ſoldiers, though one would think the gods deſerved the preference.

CAMILLUS.

Such faults are committed without any ill intention, in the tranſport of a new-gained victory: but the Roman ladies paid my vow; for they gave all the gold of their jewels to make a cup weighing eight talents, which was offered in the temple of Delphi. Wherefore the ſenate ordered a public elogium to be made on each of theſe generous women after their death.

FABIUS.

I conſent to their elogium, but by no means to yours. For you broke your vow, and they fulfilled it.

CAMILLUS.

None can tax me with having ever been guilty of a willing breach of faith. I gave one good proof of my honour.

FABIUS.

I ſee our ſchool-maſter afar off coming with his trite ſtory.

CAMILLUS.

Think not to make a jeſt of it; the ſchool-maſter does me no ſmall honour. The Falerians had, after the manner of the Greeks, employed a man acquainted with letters to educate their children in common, to the end that ſociety, emulation, and the maxims of public ſpirit might render them ſtill more children of the republic than of their parents. The traitor came and delivered up the whole children of the Falerians to me. I now had the people wholly at my mercy, by poſſeſſing ſo precious hoſtages; but I deteſted both the traitor and the treachery; I did not do like thoſe who are honeſt but by halves, and love the treaſon though they hate the traitor. I commanded the lictor to tear the ſchool-

maſter's

maſter's cloaths from off his back; I cauſed his hands to be tied behind him, and I charged the children to whip him all the way back to their city. Was not that honourable dealing? What think you, Fabius?

FABIUS.

I think that action glorious, and that it does you more honour than the taking of Veii.

CAMILLUS.

But do you know the ſequel? It plainly ſhews what virtue does, and how far generoſity is even better policy than cunning.

FABIUS.

Did not the Falerians, touched with your behaviour, ſend ambaſſadors to you, in order to throw themſelves and their city at your diſcretion, ſaying, They could do nothing better for their country than ſubmit it to a man ſo juſt, and ſo great an enemy to treachery?

CAMILLUS.

'Tis true they did: but I ſent their ambaſſadors to Rome for the deciſion of the ſenate and people.

FABIUS.

You feared the envy and jealouſy of your fellow-citizens.

CAMILLUS.

Had I not reaſon? The more we practiſe virtue beyond others, the more ought we to fear provoking their jealouſy. Beſides, I owed that deference to the commonwealth; however, they would give no deciſion, but ſent back the ambaſſadors to me, and I finiſhed the affair with the ſame generous procedure with which I had begun it. I left the Falerians at liberty to govern themſelves according to their own laws, and concluded with them a juſt peace, and honourable for their city.

FABIUS.

I have heard that the ſoldiers of your army were highly enraged at the peace, for they expected a great booty.

CAMILLUS.

Was I not to prefer Rome's glory and my own honour to the covetouſneſs of the ſoldiers?

FABIUS.

I allow it. But to return to our queſtion: you do not know, perhaps, that I have given ſtronger proofs of probity than you did in the affair of your ſchool-maſter.

CAMILLUS.

No; I do not know it, nor indeed can I believe it.

FABIUS.

I had agreed with Hannibal about an exchange of priſoners, and that thoſe who could not be exchanged ſhould be ranſomed at the rate of two hundred and fifty drachms a man. The exchange ended, it proved that there were over the number of Cathaginian priſoners, two hundred and fifty Romans to be ranſomed. The ſenate diſapproves my treaty, and refuſes payment: whereupon I ſent my ſon to Rome to ſell my eſtate, and paid at my own expence all the ranſoms which the ſenate would not. You were generous only at the charge of the republic; but I was ſo upon my own expence: what you did was only in concert with the ſenate; what I did was in oppoſition to the ſenate itſelf.

CAMILLUS.

It is no hardſhip for a man of ſpirit to ſacrifice a little money, in order to purchaſe ſo much glory. For my part I ſhewed my generoſity by ſaving my ungrateful country. But for me, the Gauls had not even left you a city of Rome to defend. Come, let us go

before Minos, that he may put an end to our diſpute, and aſcertain our ranks.

DIALOGUE XXXIV.

FABIUS MAXIMUS AND HANNIBAL.

A general ought to ſacrifice his reputation to the public ſafety.

HANNIBAL.

I Have cauſed you many a ſorry day and ſleepleſs night. Have I not? own it honeſtly.

FABIUS.

'Tis true: but I had my revenge.

HANNIBAL.

Not much of that neither: you did nothing but retire before me, and ſeek inacceſſible encampments upon the mountains; you were ever in the clouds. It was but a bad way to retrieve the Roman reputation, to betray ſo much fear.

FABIUS.

One muſt always mind the main chance. After

After the loſs of ſo many battles, I had compleated the republic's ruin, had I hazarded freſh engagements. It was expedient to raiſe the ſpirits of our troops, to accuſtom them to your arms, to your elephants, to your ſtratagems, to your order of battle; to let you diſſolve in the pleaſures of Capua, and to wait till you waſted away your ſtrength by degrees.

HANNIBAL.

But in the mean time you diſhonoured yourſelf by your timorouſneſs. A fine reſource for a country after ſo many calamities, is a captain, who dares to attempt nothing, who, like a hare, ſtarts at his own ſhadow, who finds no rocks ſteep enough for his ever-guilty troops to clamber over! This was cheriſhing the cowardice in your camp, and encreaſing the courage in mine.

FABIUS.

It was better to diſhonour one's ſelf by ſuch cowardice than to cauſe the whole flower of the Romans to be cut off, as Terentius Varro did at Cannae. What tends to ſave one's country, and to render the enemies victories fruitleſs, can never diſhonour a captain. The world ſees he has preferred the public ſafety to his own reputa-

tion, which is dearer to him than life, and that ſacriſice of his reputation muſt needs acquire him a great one. Tho' indeed his reputation is not in queſtion, there is no danger of any thing but the raſh cenſures of certain critics, who have not extenſive enough views to ſee how far that ſlow manner of making war may prove advantageous in the end. One muſt even let people be talking, who conſider only what is preſent and palpable. When once by your patience you have obtained a great ſucceſs, the very perſons who have moſt condemned you will be the moſt forward in your applauſe. They judge only by the ſucceſs. Do but ſucceed, and they will load you with encomiums.

HANNIBAL.

But what ſhould your allies think?

FABIUS.

I let them think what they pleaſed, ſo I ſaved Rome; rightly judging that I ſhould be cleared from all their cenſures, when I got the better of you.

HANNIBAL.

Of me! you never once had that glory. I ſhewed that I could laugh at all your military skill; for with fires faſtened to the horns of a great number of oxen, I gave you the

the ſlip, and decamped in the night, while you ſtill imagined me hard by your camp.

FABIUS.

Thoſe ſtratagems may deceive any body, but they are no wiſe deciſive in the caſe betwixt us. In a word, you cannot diſown but I weakened you, re-took ſome ſtrongholds, and retrieved the diſaſters of the Roman troops. And had not the young Scipio robbed me of the glory, I had driven you out of Italy. If Scipio accompliſhed it, 'twas becauſe there was ſtill a Rome ſaved by the wiſdom of Fabius. Ceaſe therefore to laugh at a man who by giving a little ground before you, was the cauſe of your forſaking Italy, and occaſioned the fall of Carthage. 'Tis of ſmall moment to dazzle by diſadvantageous beginnings, the main matter is to end well.

DIALOGUE XXXV.

RHADAMANTHUS, CATO THE CENSOR, AND SCIPIO AFRICANUS.

The greateſt virtues are ſullied by a croſs and cenſorious paſſion.

RHADAMANTHUS.

WHO art thou, old Roman? Tell me thy name. Thou haſt but an ominous phyſiognomy, a ſtern and ſnappiſh countenance. Thou lookeſt like an ugly, ſtupid fellow; at leaſt I ſuppoſe thou haſt been ſuch in thy youth. Thou haſt been, if I miſtake not, upwards of an hundred when thou diedſt.

CATO.

No; I was but fourſcore and ten, and I thought my life very ſhort: for I liked vaſtly to live, and enjoyed a courſe of perfect good health. My name is Cato; haſt thou never heard of me, of my wiſdom, of my courage againſt the wicked?

RHA-

RHADAMANTHUS.

O! I could eaſily know thee by the picture given me of thee. Ay, 'tis juſt thyſelf, the very ſame perſon, ever ready to praiſe himſelf and to ſnarl at others. But I have a difference to ſettle between thee and the great Scipio who vanquiſhed Hannibal. So ho, Scipio, make haſte and come hither: here is Cato come at laſt, I purpoſe to judge your old quarrel immediately. Stand forth then, and let each plead his own cauſe.

SCIPIO.

As for me, I have to complain of the malicious jealouſy of Cato; it was unworthy of his high reputation: he ſided with Fabius Maximus, and was his friend for no other reaſon but in order to attack me. He wanted to prevent my paſſing into Africa. They were both timorous in their politics. Beſides, Fabius knew only his old method of ſpinning out the war, of avoiding battles, of encamping in the clouds, of waiting till the enemies ſhould waſte themſelves away. Cato, who out of pedantry loved old people, adhered to Fabius, and grew jealous of me, becauſe I was young and daring. But the principal reaſon of his prejudice was his avarice: he would have the war carried on frugally,

frugally, as he planted his cabbages and onions. I again was for having it waged with vigour, in order to bring it to a ſpeedy and proſperous concluſion; and was deſirous that the public ſhould conſider, not what it would coſt, but the actions I would perform. Poor Cato was quite forlorn, for he wanted always to govern the republic as he did his cottage, and to gain victories at a reaſonable rate. He did not ſee that Fabius' deſign would not ſucceed; never would he have driven Hannibal out of Italy. Hannibal was dexterous enough to ſubſiſt in it at the country's expence, and to preſerve allies. He would alſo have brought over continual ſupplies of freſh troops from Africa by ſea. Had not Nero defeated Aſdrubal before he could join his brother, all had been gone. The dallier Fabius had been without reſource; and Rome ſo preſſed by ſuch an enemy, muſt needs have yielded at the laſt. But Cato did not ſee that neceſſity of making a powerful diverſion, in order to carry to Carthage the war, which Hannibal had found means to tranſport to Rome. I therefore demand reparation for all the wrongs Cato hath done me, and for the perſecutions he hath raiſed againſt my family.

CATO.

CATO.

And I demand reward for having maintained juſtice and the public good againſt thy brother Lucius, who was a robber. Let us drop the African war, wherein thou wert more happy than wiſe; and let us come to the point. Was it not a baſe thing in thee, to extort from the commonwealth the command of an army for thy brother, who was incapable of it? Thou didſt promiſe to follow him, and to ſerve under him. Thou wert his pedagogue in that war againſt Antiochus. Thy brother committed all manner of injuſtice and extortion. Thou didſt ſhut thine eyes, that thou mightſt not ſee it. A brotherly fondneſs had blinded thee.

SCIPIO.

How! did not that war end gloriouſly? The great Antiochus was defeated, expelled and repulſed from the coaſts of Aſia. This was the laſt enemy that could diſpute the royal power with us. After him all kingdoms fell one upon another at the Romans' feet.

CATO.

'Tis true, Antiochus might have given trouble enough, had he taken Hannibal's counſel: but he only trifled his time away, and

and diſhonoured himſelf by lewd pleaſures. He married a young Greek in his old age. Then it was Philopemen ſaid, that had he been protector of the Acheans, he would eaſily have routed the whole army of Antiochus, by ſurprizing them in the tippling-houſes. Thy brother, and thou, Scipio, had no great difficulty to overcome enemies who had already overcome themſelves by their ſenſuality and effeminacy.

SCIPIO.

The power of Antiochus was however formidable.

CATO.

But let us return to our point. Did not Lucius, thy brother, rob, plunder, ravage? Wouldſt thou have the face to ſay that he governed like an honeſt man?

SCIPIO.

After my death thou hadſt the barbarity to condemn him in a fine, and wouldſt have had him ſeized by lictors.

CATO.

He well deſerved it. And thou who hadſt——

SCIPIO.

As for me, I plucked up a ſpirit, when I ſaw the people turning againſt me. Inſtead of

of anſwering the accuſation, I ſaid: Come, let us go to the Capitol, and thank the gods that on a day like this I overcame Hannibal and the Carthaginians. After which I expoſed myſelf no more to the caprice of fortune. I retired to Linternum, far from an ungrateful country, where I lived in a quiet ſolitude, reſpected by all men of honour, and waited death like a philoſopher. This it was that Cato the implacable cenſor obliged me to: and this it is for which I aſk juſtice.

CATO.

Thou reproacheſt me with what conſtitutes my glory. I ſpared no body in point of juſtice. I made the moſt illuſtrious Romans quake. I ſaw how manners were daily growing more corrupt through pride and pleaſures. For inſtance, can I be refuſed immortal praiſes for having expelled the ſenate Lucius Quinctius (who had been conſul, and was brother to Titus Flaminius the conqueror of Philip king of Macedon) who had the cruelty to cauſe a man to be put to death before a young boy whom he loved, in order to gratify the child's curioſity with ſo dreadful a ſpectacle?

SCIPIO.

SCIPIO.

I grant that action was juſt, and that thou didſt often puniſh the guilty. But thou wert too ſevere againſt every body; and when thou hadſt done a good action, thou boaſtedſt of it too groſsly. Doſt thou remember thy having formerly ſaid, that Rome owed more to thee than thou owedſt to Rome? Such a ſpeech was fooliſh in the mouth of a man of gravity.

RHADAMANTHUS.

What anſwereſt thou, Cato, to this charge?

CATO.

That I actually ſupported the Roman republic againſt the ſoftneſs and pride of the women, who corrupted its manners; that I kept the great in awe of the laws; that I practiſed myſelf what I taught others; and that the commonwealth did not in return take my part againſt thoſe I had made my enemies only for her ſake. As my eſtate lay in the neighbourhood of that of Manius Curius, I propoſed from my youth to imitate that great man in ſimplicity of manners, while, on the other hand, I took Demoſthenes for my model of eloquence; inſomuch, that I was even called the Latin Demoſthenes. Every day

day was I ſeen going naked with my ſlaves to till the ground. But think not that this application to agriculture and eloquence diverted me from the military art. At the age of ſeventeen I ſhewed myſelf intrepid in the wars againſt Hannibal. Very early was my body covered with ſcars. When I was ſent pretor into Sardinia, I aboliſhed the luxury that all other pretors had introduced before me. I meant nothing but to eaſe the people, and to reject all bribes. Being made conſul, I gained a battle in Spain, on this ſide the Betis, over the Barbarians. After this victory, I took more towns in Spain than I was days in it.

SCIPIO.

Another inſupportable brag! but it is not new to us, for often haſt thou made it, and many that have come hither within theſe twenty years have made me laugh with it. But, honeſt Cato, it is not before me thou ſhouldeſt talk ſo. I know Spain, and thy glorious conqueſts.

CATO.

It is certain, that four hundred towns ſurrendered to me almoſt at one and the ſame time, and thou never madeſt ſo many.

SCIPIO.

SCIPIO.

Carthage alone is more valuable than all thy four hundred villages.

CATO.

But what wilt thou ſay of my conduct under Maximus Aeilius, in marching over ſuch precipices, and ſurpriſing Antiochus in the mountains between Macedonia and Theſſaly?

SCIPIO.

I approve that action, and it were unjuſt to refuſe it commendations: they are all due to thee for having reſtrained evil manners; but nothing can excuſe thy nigardly avarice.

CATO.

So thou talkeſt, becauſe it was thou that didſt accuſtom the ſoldiers to live delicately. But it muſt be conſidered, that I found myſelf in a commonwealth, which was daily growing more and more corrupted. Expences increaſed without meaſure; a fiſh gave now more money than an ox had done when I entered upon public affairs. 'Tis true, that things at the loweſt price to me appeared ſtill too dear, when they were of no uſe. I ſaid to the Romans: What avails it you to govern nations, if your vain and corrupted

corrupted women govern you? Was I in the wrong to ſpeak thus, when they lived in ſo ſhameleſs a manner? Every one ruined himſelf, and ſtuck at no baſeneſs or diſhoneſty, to procure wherewithal to ſupport his extravagant expences. I was cenſor; I had acquired ſome authority from my age and virtue; how then could I hold my tongue?

SCIPIO.

But why be ſtill informer-general at fourſcore and ten? A glorious employment for that age!

CATO.

'Tis the employment of a man who hath loſt none of his vigour, or of his zeal for the common weal, and who ſacrificeth himſelf for its ſake to the hatred of the great, who want to lead diſorderly lives with impunity.

SCIPIO.

But thou haſt been accuſed as often as thou haſt accuſed others. Thou haſt been ſo, I think, as good as threeſcore and ten times, and that at the age of fourſcore years.

CATO.

'Tis true; and I glory in it. It was not poſſible but the wicked ſhould by calumnies wage

wage a continual war againſt a man, who never paſſed them any thing.

SCIPIO.

Thou hadſt thy own difficulties to defend thyſelf againſt the laſt accuſations.

CATO.

I confeſs it, and is it any wonder? 'Tis very hard to give account of one's whole life before men of another age. I was a poor old man expoſed to the inſults of the youth, who thought I doted, and who counted all I had done formerly as fables. When I would at any time be relating it, they did nothing but gape and laugh at me as an eternal Egotiſt.

SCIPIO.

They were not far in the wrong. But after all, why wert thou ſo fond of reprehending others? Thou wert like a ſnarling cur that barks at all who go paſt.

CATO.

I found all my life, that I learned much more by reproving fools, than by converſing with the wiſe. The wiſe are ſuch but by halves, and give but faint leſſons; but fools are thoroughly fools, and a perſon has but to ſee them to know how he ſhould not behave.

SCIPIO.

SCIPIO.

I grant it. But thou who art wiſe, why wert thou at firſt ſuch an enemy to the Greeks?

CATO.

Becauſe I was afraid the Greeks would communicate to us their art much more than their wiſdom, and their diſſolute manners than their ſciences. I did by no means like all thoſe muſicians, poets, painters, ſculptors: all that tends only to an idle curioſity, and a voluptuous life. I thought it better to keep our ruſtic ſimplicity, our laborious and ſober life in agriculture, to be more unpoliſhed, and to live better, to talk leſs about virtue, and to practiſe it more.

SCIPIO.

Why then didſt thou afterwards take ſo much trouble in thy old age to learn the Greek tongue?

CATO.

I at laſt ſuffered myſelf to be inchanted by the Syrens, like the reſt. I liſtened to the Grecian muſes. But I am much afraid all thoſe little Greek ſophiſters that come ſtarving to Rome to make their fortune will complete the corruption of the Roman manners.

SCIPIO.

SCIPIO.

Thy fears are not groundleſs: but thou ſhouldſt alſo have been afraid of corrupting the Roman manners by thy avarice.

CATO.

I avaritious! I was a good husband; I wanted to let nothing be loſt, and yet I ſpent too much.

RHADAMANTHUS.

O! the plain language of avarice, which thinks itſelf always prodigal.

SCIPIO.

Was it not ſcandalous for thee to forſake agriculture, in order to run into the moſt infamous uſury? Thou thoughtſt, towards thy latter days, as I have heard, that thy lands and flocks did not yield thee a ſufficient income; and ſo didſt turn uſurer. Was that a trade for a Cenſor, who wanted to reform the city? What haſt thou now to anſwer?

RHADAMANTHUS.

Thou dareſt not ſpeak, and I plainly ſee that thou art guilty. This is a cauſe pretty difficult to judge. I muſt, my friend Cato, at once puniſh and reward thee. Thou puzzleſt me vaſtly. Be this then my deciſion. I am touched with thy virtues and noble actions in behalf of the republic; but then

then what likelihood is there of an uſurer's getting into the Elyſian fields? No: that were too great a ſcandal. Thou ſhalt remain therefore, if it pleaſe thee, at the gate. But thy conſolation ſhall be to keep others out alſo. Thou ſhalt controul all who preſent themſelves. Thou ſhalt be cenſor here below as thou waſt at Rome. Thou ſhalt have for ſmaller gratifications all the virtues of mankind to carp at. I deliver up to thee Lucius Scipio, Lucius Quinctius, and all the reſt, on whom to vent thy wrath. Thou mayſt alſo exerciſe it upon the other defuncts, who ſhall crowd from all quarters of the world, Roman citizens, great captains, barbarous kings, tyrants of nations: all ſhall be ſubject to thy ſpleen and ſatire. But beware of Lucius Scipio; for I appoint him to cenſure thee, in his turn, without mercy. Here is money for thee to lend to all the dead, who ſhall have none in their mouth to pay their paſſage of Charon's ferry. If thou lend it out to any upon uſury, Lucius will not fail to inform me of it, nor I to puniſh thee as the moſt treacherous of villains.

DIALOGUE XXXVI.

SCIPIO AND HANNIBAL.

Virtue is its own reward.

HANNIBAL.

HERE are we two met again, as we were in Afric a ſhort time before the battle of Zama.

SCIPIO.

'Tis true: but to day's conference is very different from that other. We have no more glory to acquire, nor victory to obtain. We have now nothing remaining but a vain and faint ſhadow of what we have been, with a dream-like remembrance of our adventures. 'Tis this makes Hannibal and Scipio friends. The ſame gods who laid Carthage in the duſt, have reduced to a few aſhes the conqueror of Carthage whom you behold.

HANNIBAL.

Undoubtedly it hath been in your ſolitude of Linternum, that you learned all this fine philoſophy.

SCIPIO.

SCIPIO.

Though I had not learned it in my retreat, I ſhould here. For death gives the ſtrongeſt leſſons of the vanity of all that the world moſt admires.

HANNIBAL.

Diſgrace and retirement have not been without their uſe towards your making theſe wiſe reflexions.

SCIPIO.

I allow it: but you have, no leſs than I, had thoſe inſtructions from fortune. You were witneſs to the fall of Carthage, were fain to abandon your country, and after making Rome tremble, were forced to fly its vengeance, by wandering from place to place, like a vagabond.

HANNIBAL.

'Tis true: but I did not abandon my country till I could no longer defend her, and till ſhe could no longer protect me. I quitted her in order to prevent her utter deſtruction, and that I might not ſee her thraldom. You, on the contrary, were forced to leave your country at her higheſt pitch of glory, and that glory ſhe derived from you. Can ought be harder! What ingratitude!

SCIPIO.

That we muſt expect from men, even when we ſerve them beſt. Thoſe who do good out of ambition, are never content. Sooner or later fortune ſtill betrays them, and men they find ungrateful. But when we do good for the love of virtue, the virtue we love does always ſufficiently recompence by the delight there is in following it, and makes us deſpiſe all other rewards, of which we are deprived.

DIALOGUE XXXVII.

SCIPIO AND HANNIBAL.

Ambition has no limits.

SCIPIO.

METHINKS I am ſtill at our conference before the battle of Zama; but we are not here in the ſame ſituation, being no longer at variance. All our wars are extinguiſhed in the waters of the river Lethe; after having each of us conquered ſo many provinces,

provinces, a little urn ſerves to collect our aſhes.

HANNIBAL.

All that is true. Our paſt glory is now but a dream, we here have nothing to conquer: for my part, I grow weary of this inactive ſtate.

SCIPIO.

You muſt grant, you were reſtleſs and inſatiable.

HANNIBAL.

Why ſo! I think I was very moderate.

SCIPIO.

Moderate! What moderation! At firſt the Carthaginians thought only of maintaining themſelves in the weſtern part of Sicily. The wiſe king Gelo, and then the tyrant Dionyſius, had given them a good deal of exerciſe.

HANNIBAL.

True; but after we thought to ſubdue all thoſe flouriſhing cities, which were governed like ſo many republics, as Leontum, Agrigentum, and Selinus.

SCIPIO.

But in ſhort, the Romans and Carthaginians lying over againſt each other, with the ſea between, looked upon each other, with

a jealous eye, and diſputed the iſland of Sicily, which lay in the middle betwixt the two pretending nations. This ſure was the boundary of your ambition.

HANNIBAL.

By no means: we had alſo our pretenſions on the ſide of Spain. New Carthage gave us in that country an empire almoſt equal to that of the old in the heart of Afric.

SCIPIO.

All that is true: but it was in ſome part for your trade that you firſt eſtabliſhed yourſelves on the Spaniſh coaſt. The commodiouſneſs you there found inſpired you gradually with the deſign of conquering thoſe extenſive countries.

HANNIBAL.

At the time of our firſt war with the Romans, we were powerful in Spain, and had ſoon been maſters of it, but for your commonwealth.

SCIPIO.

In fine, the treaty which we concluded with the Carthaginians forced them to renounce all the countries that lie between the Pyrenees and the Ebro.

HANNIBAL.

Force reduced us to that ſcandalous peace.

We

We had ſuffered great loſſes both by ſea and land. My father, who turned all his thoughts towards retrieving our unhappy circumſtances, made me ſwear at the altars, when but nine years old, to be, to the day of my death, an irreconcilable enemy to the Romans. I ſwore it; I fulfilled it. I attended my father into Spain: after his death I commanded the Carthaginian army, and you know what happened.

SCIPIO.

Yes I know it, and you too know it to your coſt. But if you made conſiderable progreſs, it was becauſe you found fortune every where coming to meet you, and inviting you to follow her. The hopes of joining the Gauls, our ancient enemies, induced you to croſs the Pyrenees. The victory you gained over us upon the Rhone encouraged you to paſs the Alps. You there loſt a vaſt number of ſoldiers, horſes and elephants. When you had paſſed, you eaſily routed our frighted troops, whom you ſurprized at Ticinum. One victory draws on another by damping the ſpirits of the vanquiſhed, and procuring many allies to the victors; for all the petty nations of the country flock always to the ſtrongeſt ſide.

HANNIBAL.

But what think you of the battle of Trebia?

SCIPIO.

It was no hard purchaſe, coming upon the back of ſo many others. After that you were maſter of Italy. Thraſymenus and Cannae were rather fields of blood than of battle. Your pierced through all Italy: now ſpeak ingenuouſly, did you at firſt expect ſo great ſucceſs?

HANNIBAL.

I did not know how far I might go; but I had a mind to try my fortune. I diſconcerted the Romans by ſo bold and unforeſeen a puſh. When I found fortune ſo favourable, I thought I ought to improve her kindneſs. Succeſs inſpired me with deſigns, which I ſhould never have preſumed to conceive.

SCIPIO.

Well, is not that what I was ſaying? Sicily, Spain, Italy, were now nothing to you. The Greeks with whom you had confederated would ſoon have bended under your yoke.

HANNIBAL.

But did not you, who ſpeak, do preciſely what

what you reproach us with having been capable of doing? Spain, Sicily, Carthage itſelf, and Afric were nothing: quickly all Greece, Macedon, all the iſlands, Egypt, and Aſia fell at your feet: and you had even great difficulty to ſuffer the Parthians and Arabians to be free. The whole univerſe was now too ſmall for thoſe Romans, who for the ſpace of five hundred years had been confined to vanquiſh round about their city the Volſci, the Sabines and the Samnites.

DIALOGUE XXXVIII.

SYLLA, CATILINE, AND CÆSAR.

The fatal conſequences of vice do not reclaim corrupted princes.

SYLLA.

I Come in haſte to give you an advice, Cæſar, and have brought a very good ſecond to perſuade you; Catiline by name. You know him, and were but too much of

his cabal. Don't be afraid of us; ghoſts do no harm.

CÆSAR.

I could well diſpenſe with your viſit: your ſhapes are frightful, and your advice will perhaps be ſtill more ſo. But what have you preſſing to tell me.

SYLLA.

That you muſt by no means aſpire to tyranny.

CÆSAR.

Why ſo? did not you aſpire to it yourſelf?

SYLLA.

Doubtleſs; and 'tis for that very reaſon we are the more to be minded, when we adviſe you to renounce it.

CÆSAR.

For my part, I reſolve to imitate you in every thing; to aim at the tyranny as you aimed at it, and then to return, like you, from the other world, after my death, to undeceive the tyrants who ſhall follow me.

SYLLA.

This is not a time for your jokes and witticiſms. We ghoſts are for nothing but ſerious affairs. Let us come to the point. I voluntarily quitted the tyranny, and found my

my account in ſo doing. Catiline ſtrove to arrive at it, and unhappily miſcarried in the attempt. Theſe are two very inſtructive examples for you.

CÆSAR.

I do by no means underſtand your fine examples. You firſt held the republic in chains, and then were ſilly enough to degrade yourſelf. After quitting the ſupreme power you lived diſparaged, diſpirited, obſcure, uſeleſs. The fortunate man was abandoned by fortune. There now is one of your examples which I do not in the leaſt underſtand. As for the other, Catiline had a mind to make himſelf maſter, and ſo far he did well: but he did not rightly know how to take his meaſures; and ſo much the worſe for him. For my part I ſhall attempt nothing, but with proper precaution.

CATILINE.

I had taken the ſame meaſures you do. I flattered the youth, corrupted them by pleaſures, engaged them in crimes, involved them in expences, and drowned them in debt. I got into power by means of the women of an intriguing and pragmatical ſpirit. Could you have done better?

CÆSAR.

You talk of things I know nothing about. Every one does as he may.

CATILINE.

'Tis yet in your power to avoid the rocks I ſplit upon, and I am come to warn you of them.

SYLLA.

For my part, I tell you again, that I found my account in renouncing public affairs before my death.

CÆSAR.

Renounce public affairs! ſhould one abandon the republic in its exigencies?

SYLLA.

Ah! that is not what I mean: there is a wide difference between ſerving it and tyranniſing over it.

CÆSAR.

Why then did you ceaſe to ſerve it?

SYLLA.

Oh! you will not hear me. I ſay that a man ſhould ſerve his country to the day of his death; but that he ſhould neither aim at tyranny, nor maintain himſelf in it when attained.

DIALOGUE XXXIX.

CÆSAR AND CATO.

Deſpotic and tyrannical power is ſo far from ſecuring the peace and authority of princes, that on the contrary it makes them wretched, and draws inevitable deſtruction upon them.

CÆSAR.

ALAS! my dear Cato, thou art in a miſerable condition: what a frightful wound!

CATO.

I ſtabb'd myſelf at Utica after the battle of Thapſus, that I might not ſurvive liberty: but thou whoſe compaſſion I move, how comes it that thou haſt followed me ſo ſoon? What do I perceive! how many wounds on thy body! ſtay, let me count them: no leſs than three and twenty!

CÆSAR.

Thou wilt be very much aſtoniſhed when I tell thee that I received ſo many ſtabs in the midſt of the ſenate, from my beſt friends. What baſe treachery!

CATO.

CATO.

No, I am not at all aſtoniſhed at it: waſt thou not the tyrant of thy friends as well as of the reſt of thy citizens? Was it not their duty to lend an helping hand to the avenging of their oppreſſed country? They ought to have ſacrified not only their friend, but even their own brother, after the example of Timoleon; and their own children, as did old Brutus.

CÆSAR.

One of his deſcendants has but too well followed that noble example: Brutus, whom I ſo much loved; Brutus, who paſſed for my own ſon; that very Brutus was head of the conſpiracy againſt me.

CATO.

O happy Brutus! who hath made Rome free, and hath immortalized his hands in the blood of a ſecond Tarquin, more impious and proud than he whom Junius expelled.

CÆSAR.

Thou wert always prejudiced againſt me, and extreme in thy maxims of virtue.

CATO.

Who was it prejudiced me againſt thee? Thy diſſolute, prodigal, crafty, effeminate life; thy debts, thy cabals, thy audaciouſneſs:

neſs: this it was that prepoſſeſſed Cato againſt that man, whoſe ſaſh, trailing robe, and effeminate air, promiſed nothing worthy of the ancient cuſtoms: nor didſt thou at all deceive me; I knew thee from thy childhood. Oh! had I been believed——

CÆSAR.

Thou wouldſt have involved me in Catiline's conſpiracy, in order to deſtroy me.

CATO.

Thou then didſt live a woman's life, and waſt a man only againſt thy country. What means did I not uſe to convict thee? But Rome was running headlong to her ruin, and would not know her enemies.

CÆSAR.

Thy eloquence, I confeſs, alarmed me, and made me have recourſe to authority; yet canſt thou not deny but I brought myſelf off like a clever fellow.

CATO.

Say, like a clever villain. Thou didſt dazzle the wiſeſt by thy moderate and inſinuating language; thou didſt favour the conſpirators upon pretence of not puſhing rigour too far. I alone oppoſed, but to no purpoſe: from that time the gods were incenſed againſt Rome.

CÆSAR.

CÆSAR.

Tell me now the truth: thou didſt fear, after the battle of Thapſus, thy falling into my hands; thou wouldſt have been horridly confounded to appear before me. But ah! kneweſt thou not that I wanted only to vanquiſh and to pardon?

CATO.

'Twas the tyrant's pardon, 'twas life itſelf; yea, the life of Cato due to Cæſar that I dreaded: it was better to die than to ſee thee.

CÆSAR.

I would have uſed thee generouſly, as I did thy ſon. Hadſt thou not better been ſtill living for the ſuccour and ſupport of the republic?

CATO.

There is no more republic, when there is no more liberty.

CÆSAR.

But ſhould one therefore fall foul on one's ſelf?

CATO.

My own hands ſet me at liberty in ſpite of the tyrant, and I deſpiſed the life he had to proffer me. As for thee, thy own friends were

were forced to tear thee in pieces like a monſter.

CÆSAR.

But if life was ſo ſhameful for a Roman after my victory, why didſt thou ſend me thy ſon? Hadſt thou a mind to make him degenerate?

CATO.

Every one follows the dictates of his own heart in his choice to live or die: Cato could not but die; his ſon, not ſo great a man as he, might yet ſupport life, and hope, by reaſon of his youth, to ſee freer and happier times. Alas! what did I not ſuffer, when I let my ſon go to the tyrant!

CÆSAR.

But why the tyrant? I never took the title of King.

CATO.

'Tis the thing, not the name, that is in queſtion. Beſides, how often waſt thou ſeen to uſe various indirect arts to accuſtom the ſenate and people to the royalty. Antony himſelf, at the feaſt of the Lupercalia, had the impudence, under colour of a joke, to incircle thy head with a diadem. This joke looked too like earneſt, and ſtruck immediate horror. Thou didſt eaſily perceive the public

public indignation, and ſo didſt remit to Jove an honour which thyſelf did not dare to accept. This it was that fully determined the conſpirators upon thy ruin. Well, have we not pretty good intelligence here below?

CÆSAR.

Too good: but thou doſt not do me juſtice. My government was mild; I behaved myſelf like a true father of the country: of this one may judge from the grief the people teſtified after my death: that, you know, is a time when flattery is no longer in ſeaſon. Alas! poor folks! when my bloody robe was preſented to them, how ſanguine were they to revenge me! what were the regrets! what pomp in the field of Mars at my funeral! what haſt thou now to anſwer?

CATO.

That the people is always the people, credulous, groſs, capricious, blind, and an enemy to its real intereſt. For, having favoured the ſucceſſors of the tyrant, and perſecuted their deliverers, what hath that people not ſuffered? How much of the pureſt blood of the citizens hath through numberleſs proſcriptions ſtreamed! The Triumvirs were more barbarous than the very Gauls

that

that took Rome. Happy he who hath not ſeen thoſe days of deſolation! But now inform me, O tyrant, wherefore didſt thou tear out the bowels of Rome, thy mother? What reapeſt thou now from having enſlaved thy country? Was glory thy aim? Shouldſt thou not have found a purer and a brighter in preſerving the liberty and greatneſs of that city, Miſtreſs of the world, like Fabius, Fabricius, Marcellus, Scipio? Or, if thou wantedſt a pleaſant and a happy life, didſt thou find it in the horrors inſeparable from tyranny? Every day of thy life was as big with danger to thee, as that wherein ſo many citizens immortalized their virtue by butchering thee. The ſight of every true Roman muſt needs have frightened thee. Was this then that tranquil and happy life which thou didſt purchaſe at the price of ſo much trouble, and of ſo many crimes? But what do I ſay? Thou haſt not even had time to enjoy the fruit of thine impiety. Speak, tyrant, ſpeak; 'tis now as much pain to thee to ſtand my looks, as it would have been to me to have born thy hated preſence, when I embraced death at Utica. Say, if thou dareſt, that thou waſt happy.

CÆSAR.

I own I was not: but it was ſuch as thou that diſturbed my happineſs.

CATO.

Say rather thyſelf diſturbed it. Hadſt thou loved thy country, thy country would have loved thee: he whom his country loveth, hath no need of guards; his whole country watches round him. Real ſafety lies in doing nought but good, and in giving every body a concern in one's preſervation. Thou wouldſt reign, and make thyſelf dreaded. Well, thou didſt reign, thou waſt feared: but men delivered themſelves from the tyrant and their fear together. So periſh thoſe, who wanting to be feared by all men, have themſelves every thing to fear from all men, by making it their intereſt to be beforehand with them, and to deliver themſelves from their tyranny.

CÆSAR.

But that power which thou calleſt tyrannical was become neceſſary. Rome could no longer maintain her liberty; and ſo muſt have a maſter. This Pompey was beginning to be, and I could not bear that he ſhould be ſo to my prejudice.

CA-

CATO.

Thou ſhouldſt have pulled down the tyrant, without aſpiring to the tyranny. In ſhort, if Rome was grown ſo daſtardly as to be no longer able to want a maſter, thou hadſt better have let that crime alone to another. When a traveller is like to fall into the hands of villains, who are preparing to rob him, ought a man to make haſte to prevent them by committing ſo horrid an action? But the too great authority of Pompey ſerved thee only for a pretence. Do not we know what thou ſaidſt as thou waſt going to Spain, in a petty town where ſeveral citizens were ſoliciting the magiſtracy? Doſt thou think we have forgot thoſe Greek verſes that were ſo often in thy mouth? Beſides, if thou waſt ſenſible of the miſery and infamy of tyranny, why didſt thou not quit it?

CÆSAR.

Ah! how was it poſſible to quit it? The aſcent is ſteep and rugged; but there is no road to deſcend by; there is no getting out of it, but by falling over the precipice.

CATO.

Unhappy man, why then aſpire to it? Why overturn every thing to attain it? Why

ſpill

ſpill ſo much blood, and not even ſpare thy own, which however was ſhed too late? Thou vainly ſeekeſt excuſes.

CÆSAR.

And thou doſt not anſwer me: I aſk thee, how one can with ſafety quit the tyranny?

CATO.

Go aſk Sylla the queſtion, and now be ſilent: conſult that blood-thirſty monſter; his example will make thee bluſh. Farewel: I fear the indignation of Brutus's ghoſt, did it obſerve me ſpeaking with thee.

DIALOGUE XL.

CATO AND CICERO.

The characters of theſe two philoſophers, with a contraſt of what was too outrageous and auſtere in the virtue of the one, and too weak in that of the other.

CATO.

GREAT orator, it is long ſince I expected you; 'tis a great while ſince you ſhould

ſhould have arrived: but you have come as late as you poſſibly could.

CICERO.

I am come after a death full of courage, I have fallen a victim to the republic; for ever ſince the time of Catiline's conſpiracy, when I ſaved Rome, none could be an enemy to the commonwealth without declaring war againſt me.

CATO.

Yet I have underſtood you found favour with Cæſar by your abject ſubmiſſions; that you laviſhed the higheſt encomiums upon him; that you were an intimate friend of all his reptile favourites, and that you even perſuaded people in your letters to have recourſe to his clemency in order to live tamely in the heart of Rome in ſlavery. Such the uſe of eloquence!

CICERO.

'Tis true I harangued Cæſar to obtain the pardon of Marcellus and Ligarius.

CATO.

Ah! is it not better to be ſilent than to employ one's eloquence in flattering a tyrant? O Cicero! I had more art than you: I had the art to be ſilent, and to die.

CI-

CICERO.

You have not ſeen a fine obſervation I made in my Offices, which is, that every one ought to act up to his character. There are ſome men of a proud and untractable ſpirit, who ought to ſupport that auſtere and violent virtue even unto death. It is not allowable for them to bear the ſight of a tyrant; they have nothing for it but to kill themſelves: on the other hand, there is a mild and more ſociable virtue of certain moderate perſons, who love the republic beyond their own glory: theſe ought to live, and keep meaſure with the tyrant for the public good; they owe themſelves to their citizens, and it is not lawful for them to complete their country's deſtruction by a precipitate death.

CATO.

You have honeſtly diſcharged that duty; and if we are to judge of your love to Rome by your dread of death, I muſt own that Rome owes you a great deal. But perſons that talk ſo fine, ſhould ſo artfully make all their words correſpond, as not to contradict themſelves. That Cicero, who praiſed Cæſar to the ſkies, and who was not aſhamed to pray the gods not to envy men ſo great a bleſſing;

bleſſing; with what face could that Cicero afterwards ſay, That the murderers of Cæſar were the deliverers of their country? What groſs contradiction! what infamous baſeneſs! Can the virtue of man be relied on, who truckles thus to the times?

CICERO.

It was expedient to accommodate one's ſelf to the exigencies of the ſtate. This compliance was ſtill more juſtifiable than the war of Afric undertaken by Scipio and you, contrary to all the rules of prudence. For my part, I had foretold, as may be ſeen in my letters, that you would miſcarry in it. But your inflexible and violent temper could ſuffer no moderate overtures, you were born for extremities.

CATO.

And you to fear every thing. As you have frequently yourſelf confeſſed, you were capable of nothing but foreſeeing inconveniencies. The prevailing party brought you always over ſo far as to make you recant your former ſentiments. Have you not been ſeen to admire Pompey, and exhort all your friends to give themſelves up to him? Did you not afterwards think that Pompey would bring Rome into bondage, if he got

the better of Cæſar? How, ſaid you, will he ever truſt honeſt men, when he is maſter, ſeeing he will not truſt any of us during the war, wherein he ſtands in need of our aſſiſtance? In ſhort, did you not admire Cæſar? Did you not court and praiſe Octavius?

CICERO.

But I attacked Antony: what can be more vehement than my harangues againſt him, like thoſe of Demoſthenes againſt Philip?

CATO.

They are admirable; but Demoſthenes knew better than you how to die. Antipater could give him neither death nor life. Were you forced to fly as you did, without knowing whither you went, and to wait death from the hands of Popilius? I did better to embrace it voluntarily at Utica.

CICERO.

And I think it better never to have deſpaired of the republic to my dying hour, and to have ſupported it by moderate counſels, than to have waged a weak and imprudent war, and quitted the field in a fit of deſpair.

CA-

CATO.

Your negociations turned out no better than my African war. For, Octavius, young as he was, played upon the great Cicero, who was the light of Rome: he made a tool of you in order to get into power; and then delivered you up to Antony. But you that talk of war, did you ever know ought about it? I have not yet forgot your glorious conqueſt of Pindeniſſus, a petty town in the ſtreights of Cilicia, little harder to take than a ſheepfold. For this noble expedition nothing leſs would ſerve you than a triumph. The ſupplications appointed by the ſenate were not ſufficient for your exploits. You may remember my anſwer to the ſolicitations you made me upon that head: you ought to be better pleaſed, ſaid I, with the commendations of the ſenate, which by your good conduct you have deſerved, than with a triumph, which could leſs ſpeak the virtue of the triumpher, than the ſucceſs wherewith the gods had crowned his enterprizes. Thus do people endeavour, as they can, to amuſe men that are vain, and not fit for judging for themſelves.

CICERO.

I own I was always very fond of praiſe;

but is it any wonder? Did I not richly deſerve it by my conſulſhip, by my public ſpirit, by my eloquence; in ſhort, by my taſte for philoſophy? When I ſaw no further poſſibility of ſerving Rome under her misfortunes, I conſoled myſelf in an honeſt receſs, by writing upon virtue.

CATO.

You had better practiſed it in time of danger, than wrote upon it. Come, own it fairly, you were but a mean copier of the Greeks. You blended Plato with Epicurus, the Old Academy with the New; and after playing the hiſtorian upon their precepts, in dialogues which were generally rather ſoliloquies, you could hardly ever bring any thing to a concluſion. You were ever a ſtranger to philoſophy, and thought of nothing but adorning your wit with its beauties; in fine, you were always a waverer, both in politics and philoſophy.

CICERO.

Cato, farewel: your ill humour carries you too far; to ſee you ſo ſullen, one would be tempted to think that you regret the loſs of life. For my part, that gives me no uneaſineſs, though I have not pretended to ſo much heroiſm. You have an over-weaning

ing conceit of yourſelf, for having done in dying what a great many ſlaves have done, with as much courage as you.

DIALOGUE XLI.

CÆSAR AND ALEXANDER.

The characters of a tyrant and of a prince, who, born with the moſt excellent qualities for making a great king, gives up himſelf to his pride and paſſions. Both are the ſcourges of mankind; but the one is an object of compaſſion, whereas the other is the deteſtation of humanity.

ALEXANDER.

WHO is that Roman juſt now deſcended? He has got many a wound. Hah! I hear them ſaying it is Cæſar——I greet thee well, great Roman; the report went that thou wert going to conquer the Parthians, and to overcome the whole Eaſt: How come we to ſee thee here?

CÆSAR.

My friends murdered me in the ſenate-houſe.

ALEXANDER.

What! hadſt thou become their tyrant, thou who wert but a private citizen of Rome?

CÆSAR.

It well becomes thee to talk ſo! Didſt not thou make the unjuſt conqueſt of Aſia? Didſt not thou bring Greece into ſlavery?

ALEXANDER.

Yes: but the Greeks were a foreign people, and enemies to Macedon. I never did, like thee, enſlave my own country; on the contrary, I gave the Macedonians an everlaſting glory with the empire of the whole Eaſt.

CÆSAR.

Thou didſt conquer effeminate men, and then grew as effeminate as they. Thou ſeizedſt the riches of the Perſians; and the riches of the Perſians, by corrupting thy heart, conquered thee. Haſt thou brought down to Pluto's realms that mad pride, which made thee imagine thyſelf a god?

ALEXANDER.

I acknowledge my faults and follies. But does it become thee to upbraid me with my effeminacy? Who does not know thy infamous life in Bithynia, thy corruption at Rome,

Rome, where thou obtainedſt the higheſt honours merely by thy ſcandalous intrigues? but for thine infamous practices, thou hadſt never been more than a private perſon in thy republic. It is true indeed thou wouldſt have been ſtill living.

CÆSAR.

Thou didſt meet at Babylon from poiſon what I met at Rome from the ſword.

ALEXANDER.

My captains could not poiſon me guiltleſs; thy fellow-citizens, by aſſaſſinating thee, are become the deliverers of their country. Thus are our deaths very different; but the firſt part of our lives are ſtill more ſo. My youth was chaſte, noble, ingenuous: thine had neither ſhame nor honeſty.

CÆSAR.

Thy ghoſt hath loſt nothing of the pride and paſſion that appeared when thou waſt living.

ALEXANDER.

I was hurried away by my pride, I own. Thy conduct was more circumſpect than mine; but thou didſt by no means imitate my candour and openneſs. Thou ſhouldſt have been an honeſt man before thou hadſt

aſpired to the glory of a great man. I often was weak and vain; but I was certainly a better friend to my country, and leſs unjuſt than thou.

CÆSAR.

Thou layeſt great ſtreſs upon juſtice, without having followed it thyſelf. For my part, I think the cleverest fellow ſhould make himſelf maſter, and then govern wiſely.

ALEXANDER.

I was but too much of thy mind. The three judges have ſeverely reprimanded me for it, and have condemned my conqueſts. Yet in all my extravagancies I never thought juſtice to be deſpiſed; nor will it fare the better with thee, that thou haſt tranſgreſſed it.

CÆSAR.

The Romans are great loſers by murdering me: I had formed ſchemes to render them happy.

ALEXANDER.

The beſt ſcheme had been to have imitated Sylla, who having been, like thee, the tyrant of his country, reſtored its liberty to it; then hadſt thou, like him, died in peace: but thou canſt not believe me. Well, I go,

and

and ſhall meet thee at the bar of Æacus, Rhadamanthus, and Minos, by whom thou muſt now be judged.

DIALOGUE XLII.

CÆSAR AND POMPEY.

There is nothing more fatal in a free ſtate than the corruption of the women, and the prodigality of thoſe who aſpire to the tyranny.

POMPEY.

I Run myſelf out in expences, in order to pleaſe the Romans, and yet have much ado to compaſs it. Before I was five and twenty years old, I had triumphed: I conquered Sertorius, Mithridates, the pirates of Cilicia; theſe three triumphs attracted me a thouſand enviers; I make continual largeſſes, I give public ſhews, I win numberleſs clients by my benefactions: yet all this appeaſes not envy: ſtern Cato even refuſes my alliance; a thouſand others thwart my deſigns. What thinks my father-in-law of the matter? He ſays not a word.

CÆSAR.

I think you take a very indifferent method to govern the republic.

POMPEY.

How ſo? What do you mean? Do you know a better than giving largely to private perſons in order to ſecure their voices, than winning the favour of the people by gladiators, by the fighting of wild beaſts, by preſents of corn and wine? In ſhort, than getting a great number of zealous clients for the Sportulae I beſtow? Have not Marius, Cinna, Fimbria, Sylla, and all the other clever fellows done the ſame?

CÆSAR.

All that does not hit the aim. You are quite an ignoramus, Catiline had more ſenſe than they all.

POMPEY.

Wherein? you ſurpriſe me: Do you ſpeak ſeriouſly?

CÆSAR.

Indeed I do: I never was more ſerious in my life.

POMPEY.

And what, pray, is this ſurpriſing ſpecific for appeaſing envy, for curing ſuſpicions, for charming the Patricians and Plebeians?

CÆSAR.

CÆSAR.

Would you know it? Do as I do: I adviſe you to nothing but what I practiſe myſelf.

POMPEY.

What? to flatter the people with a ſhew of juſtice and liberty? To play the fiery Tribune, and the zealous Gracchus?

CÆSAR.

That is ſomething, but not all: there is ſtill ſomewhat much more effectual.

POMPEY.

What, pray? Is it any magical enchantment, invocation of a familiar, or knowing of the ſtars?

CÆSAR.

Pſhaw! all that is nonſenſe; mere old women's tales.

POMPEY.

How ſcornful you are! You have without doubt ſome commerce with the gods, like Numa, Scipio, and ſome others.

CÆSAR.

No, no; all theſe artifices are worn thread-bare.

POMPEY.

What can it be then? Hold me no longer in ſuſpence.

CÆSAR.

Why, I'll tell you; the two fundamental points of my doctrine are theſe: firſt, to corrupt all the women, in order to get into the moſt intimate ſecrets of every family. In the ſecond place, to borrow and ſpend without intermiſſion or meaſure; and never to repay any thing. Every creditor has an intereſt in promoting your advancement, that he may not loſe the money you owe him: he gives you his own vote, and runs through fire and water to procure you thoſe of his friends. The more creditors you have, the ſtronger is your party. In order to make myſelf maſter of Rome, I make it my buſineſs to be a general debtor to the whole city. The more I am involved, the more power I have: we have but to ſpend, and riches will flow upon us.

DIALOGUE XLIII.

CICERO AND AUGUSTUS.

To oblige the ungrateful is to deſtroy one's ſelf.

AUGUSTUS.

GOod-morrow, great orator: I am delighted to ſee thee again, for I have not forgot the obligations I have to you.

CICERO.

You may remember them here below, but you did not much remember them upon earth.

AUGUSTUS.

Do not ſay ſo: even after your death, I one day found one of my grand-children reading your works: he looked confounded at my catching him ſo employed, fearing I would reprimand him for it; but ſo far from that, I encouraged him, by ſaying of you: 'He was a great man, and loved his 'country dearly.' So you ſee I did not wait till my death to ſpeak well of you.

CICERO.

A fine reward for all I did to exalt you! When

When you appeared in the world young, and without authority after the death of Cæſar, I gave you my advice, my friends, my credit.

AUGUSTUS.

You did it not ſo much for my ſake as to counter-ballance the authority of Antony, whoſe tyranny you dreaded.

CICERO.

'Tis true, I feared not a boy ſo much as that powerful paſſionate man: In this however I erred; for you were more dangerous than he. But in ſhort, to me you owe your advancement: what did I not ſay to the ſenate on your behalf, while you were at the ſiege of Modena, wherein the two victorious conſuls, Hirtius and Panſa, fell? Their victory ſerved only to bring you to the head of the army. It was I who had cauſed the commonwealth to declare againſt Antony, by my orations, that were named Philippic. Inſtead of fighting for thoſe who had firſt put arms into your hand, you meanly combined with Antony your enemy, and Lepidus, the baſeſt of men, in order to enſlave Rome. When the monſtrous Triumvirate was formed, you aſked men's lives, or rather men's deaths, of each other. Every one,

one, to obtain crimes of his aſſociate, was forced to commit ſome himſelf. Antony was obliged to ſacrifice to your revenge Lucius Cæſar, his own uncle, in order to obtain my death from you, and you moſt ungenerouſly gave me up to his fury.

AUGUSTUS.

It is true: I could not deny a man I ſtood in need of towards making myſelf maſter of the univerſe: it was a violent temptation, and ſo may be excuſed.

CICERO.

Such black ingratitude can never be excuſed: had it not been for me you had never appeared in the government of the republic. O! how do I regret the praiſe I beſtowed upon you! You were a deceitful and treacherous friend, and became a cruel tyrant.

AUGUSTUS.

What a torrent of abuſes! I fancy you are going to make a Philippic againſt me more vehement than thoſe againſt Antony.

CICERO.

No; I left my eloquence in the Stygian waves, but poſterity will know that I made you what you were, and that it was you who put me to death, in order to gratify Antony's paſſion. What grieves me moſt is, that

that your baſeneſs, while it ſhall render your hateful to all ages, will make me deſpicable to the cenſorious. They will ſay, I was the tool of a young man, who made me ſubſervient to his ambition. One reaps nothing but ſorrow and ſhame from obliging baſe-born men.

DIALOGUE XLIV.

SERTORIUS AND MERCURY.

Fables and illuſions do more with the credulous vulgar than truth and virtue.

MERCURY.

I Am very ſorry I am in ſuch haſte to return to Olympus, for I have a great deſire to know which way thou didſt end thy life.

SERTORIUS.

I'll tell thee in two words: the young prentice and the old woman were not able to overcome me. The traitor Perpenna put me to death; had it not been for him, I ſhould have given my enemies ſome play for it.

MER-

MERCURY.

Who are thoſe thou calleſt the young prentice and the old woman?

SERTORIUS.

Don't you know? why, Pompey and Metellus. Metellus was grown dull and heavy, irreſolute, old and failed; he loſt deciſive opportunities by his ſlowneſs. Pompey, on the other hand, was without experience. With a parcel of Barbarians, I laughed at both theſe captains and their legions.

MERCURY.

I don't wonder at that; for it was reported that thou wert a magician, that thou hadſt a hind, which came into thy camp, and told thee all thy enemy's deſigns, and what thou mightſt attempt againſt them.

SERTORIUS.

I told no-body about my hind ſo long as I had occaſion for her; but now when I can no longer make uſe of her, I'll diſcover the whole myſtery.

MERCURY.

Well, was it any enchantment?

SERTORIUS.

None at all. It was a whimſical ſtratagem, which did me more ſervice than my money, my troops, or the remains of the party

party of Marius, which I had picked up in a corner of the mountains between Spain and Luſitania. A reaſonable illuſion goes a great way with credulous people.

MERCURY.

But was not this illuſion very groſs?

SERTORIUS.

Undoubtedly it was; but the people for whom it was prepared were ſtill more groſs.

MERCURY.

How did thoſe Barbarians give credit to all thou toldſt concerning thy hind?

SERTORIUS.

They thought it really true. I might have ſaid a great deal more and they would have believed it all. If at any time I diſcovered by ſcouts or ſpies the enemy's march, it was the hind that whiſpered it in my ear, Was I defeated, the hind ſpoke to me to declare that the gods were going to relieve my party. The hind commanded the country people to ſend me in all their force, leſt peſtilence and famine ſhould deſtroy them. Was my hind loſt a few days and then found again, I concealed her, and by ſome preſage or other foretold when ſhe would come back: after which I made her enter again into the camp, where ſhe failed not to bring me

me news from your godſhips. In a word, my hind did every thing; ſhe alone repaired all my misfortunes.

MERCURY.

That animal ſerved thee better than thou didſt us; for ſuch impoſtures bring a diſcredit upon immortals, and greatly prejudice our myſteries. In plain terms, thou wert an impious villain.

SERTORIUS.

I was no more ſo than Numa with his nymph Egeria; than Solon and Lycurgus with their ſecret converſation with the gods; than Socrates with his familiar ſpirit; in ſhort, than Scipio with his myſterious way of going to conſult Jove at the capitol, who inſpired all his noble enterprizes againſt Carthage. All theſe were impoſtors as well as me.

MERCURY.

But they were ſuch only in order to eſtabliſh good laws, or to render their country victorious.

SERTORIUS.

And I to defend myſelf againſt the party of the great tyrant Sylla, who had oppreſſed Rome, and who had ſent citizens debaſed into ſlaves

ſlaves to cut me off as the laſt ſupport of liberty.

MERCURY.

And ſo thou lookeſt upon the whole republic and Sylla's party as the ſame thing? The truth is, thou ſtoodeſt alone againſt all the Romans. But, in ſhort, thou didſt deceive thoſe poor Barbarians under cloak of religious myſteries.

SERTORIUS.

I did, 'tis true; but what can a man do elſe when he has to deal with fools? He muſt needs amuſe them with nonſenſe to attain his ends. Were he to tell them nothing but ſolid truths, they would give no credit to him. Trump up fables, flatter, amuſe, and both children and old people will follow you.

DIA-

DIALOGUE XLV.

POMPEY THE YOUNGER AND MENAS THE FREEDMAN.

The character of a man, who not loving virtue for its own ſake, is neither good enough to hate the treaſon, nor bad enough to be the traitor.

MENAS.

SHALL I perform a noble action?

POMPEY.

What is the matter? Thou art all in confuſion, thou lookſt like a Sibyl in her cave, ſweltring, foaming, furious.

MENAS.

It is with joy. O happy opportunity! Were the caſe mine, all had been over before this. Shall I? In one word, yes or no?

POMPEY.

Do what? Thou explaineſt nothing, and requireſt an anſwer. Say, prithee, what thou meaneſt; ſpeak plain.

MENAS.

MENAS.

You have Antony and Octavius reclined at yonder table in your ſhip; they juſt now dream of nothing but regaling themſelves.

POMPEY.

Doſt thou think I have not eyes to ſee them?

MENAS.

But have you ears to hear me? What a fine catch!

POMPEY.

How! wouldſt thou have me to betray them? To break the faith plighted to my enemies? The ſon of the valiant Pompey to do ſuch a villainous action? Ah, Menas, thou art badly acquainted with me!

MENAS.

You underſtand me ſtill worſe. It is not you that are to do the deed: here is the hand ready for it: keep your word of honour like a great man, and let Menas alone, who has promiſed nothing.

POMPEY.

But wouldſt thou have me, to whom they have truſted themſelves, let thee alone? Wouldſt thou have me to know and to ſuffer it? Ah! Menas, honeſt Menas, why didſt thou

thou tell it me! Why didſt thou aſk any queſtions?

MENAS.

Oh! You ſhall know nothing of the matter. I'll cut the cable, and we ſhall put out to ſea. The two tyrants of Rome are in your hands. Your father's manes will be revenged of Cæſar's heirs, Rome will be at liberty. Let no vain ſcruple hinder you. Menas is not Pompey: Pompey ſhall be true to his word, generous, loaded with glory. Menas the freedman, Menas ſhall perpetrate the crime, and the victorious Pompey ſhall reap the benefit.

POMPEY.

But Pompey cannot know the crime, and permit it, without partaking of the guilt. Ah wretch! thou haſt ruined all by thy ſpeaking to me. How ſorry I am that thou didſt not what was in thy power!

MENAS.

If you are ſorry, why do you not permit it? And if you cannot permit it, why are you ſorry? If the thing is good, you ſhould reſolve it without any more ado; if it is bad, why wiſh it were done, and not conſent that it be done? You contradict yourſelf: a phantom virtue frightens you. You make me

me very ſenſible of the truth of the ſaying, That man muſt have a ſtout heart to venture upon great crimes.

POMPEY.

'Tis true, Menas, I am neither good enough not to be willing to take the benefit of a crime, nor wicked enough to dare to commit it myſelf. I find myſelf in a middle ſtate, which is neither virtue nor vice. It is not true honour, but a falſe ſhame that reſtrains me. I cannot authoriſe a traitor, and yet ſhould have no abhorrence of the treaſon, were it committed to render me maſter of the univerſe.

DIALOGUE XLVI.

CALIGULA AND NERO.

The dangers of deſpotic power, when a ſovereign is weak headed.

CALIGULA.

I AM delighted to ſee thee. Thou art a rarity. Some ghoſts have attempted to make me jealous of thee, by aſſuring me, that

that thou haſt outdone me in prodigies: but I don't believe a word of it.

NERO.

A fine compariſon! why, thou wert a madman. As for me, I made ſport of men, and ſhewed them things they had never ſeen before. I put to death my mother, my wife, my governor, and my preceptor; I burned my country. Theſe are feats of a noble courage, riſing above mortal weakneſs. The vulgar name this cruelty; but I name it a contempt of all nature, and greatneſs of ſoul.

CALIGULA.

Thou art a braggadocia. Didſt thou ſtifle thy dying father as I did? Didſt thou careſs thy wife like me, ſaying to her, my pretty little head, which I can cut off when I chuſe?

NERO.

Theſe were only merry conceits. For my part, I advance nothing but what is ſolid. Oh! I had almoſt forgot one of the fineſt paſſages of my life; and that was deſtroying my brother Britannicus.

CALIGULA.

I own that is ſomething: Without doubt thou didſt it in imitation of the virtue of Rome's great founder, who ſpared not the

blood of his own brother for the public good; however, thou wert at beſt but a muſician.

NERO.

As for thee, thou hadſt higher pretenſions, thou wouldſt be a god, and put to death all who in the leaſt doubted it.

CALIGULA.

And why not? Could men's lives have been better beſtowed than in ſacrifices to my godſhip? They were ſo many victims offered upon my altars.

NERO.

I never gave into ſuch whims: but I was the greateſt muſician, and the moſt perfect player in the empire; I was alſo a good poet.

CALIGULA.

At leaſt thou thoughteſt ſo: but others thought no ſuch thing. They made a joke of both thy voice and thy verſes.

NERO.

They did not make a joke of them for nothing. Lucan had cauſe to repent his attempting to excel me.

CALIGULA.

A noble honour truly for a Roman emperor, to mount the ſtage like a buffoon, to grow

grow jealous of the poets, and to attract the public deriſion!

NERO.

It was the trip I made into Greece that fired me with ſuch a paſſion for the ſtage, and for all kinds of repreſentations.

CALIGULA.

Thou ſhouldſt have remained in Greece there to have earned thy living as a comedian, and allowed Rome to find another emperor who ſhould better ſupport its majeſty.

NERO.

Had I not my gilded houſe, which was to have been larger than the largeſt cities Ay truly, I underſtood magnificence.

CALIGULA.

Had that houſe been finiſhed, the Roman muſt have gone to ſeek quarters ſomewhere elſe than in Rome. It was proportioned to the Coloſſus which repreſented thee, and not to thee, who wert no bigger than another man.

NERO.

That was becauſe I aimed at the grand.

CALIGULA.

No, thou aimedſt at the gigantic and monſtrous. But all thoſe noble deſigns were overthrown by Vindex.

NERO.

And thine by Chereas, as thou waſt going to the theatre.

CALIGULA.

'Tis needleſs to lie. We both came to an untimely end, and that in the bloom of our youth.

NERO.

The truth of it is: few were diſpoſed to put up prayers for us, or to wiſh us a long life. A man paſſes his time but badly in the continual dread of poinards.

CALIGULA.

By thy way of ſpeaking thou wouldſt make one believe, that didſt thou return to the world thou wouldſt change thy manner of living.

NERO.

Not at all, I ſhould never be able to command myſelf. Doſt thou ſee, my good friend, thou haſt found as well as I, how dangerous a thing it is to have ſovereign authority when one has but a weak head; it very quickly turns in ſuch boundleſs power. Some men would have behaved themſelves wiſely in middle ſtations, who run mad when maſters of the univerſe.

CALIGULA.

Such madneſs would be very pleaſant, had it nothing to fear; but conſpiracies, commotions, remorſes, and the cares of a great empire ſpoil the ſport. Beſides, the farce is but ſhort, or rather it is a deep tragedy that cloſes with an abrupt cataſtrophe. And then one muſt come here and reckon with three teſty, ſevere, old prigs, who are not to be played withal, and who puniſh as miſcreants thoſe who claimed adoration upon earth. I obſerve Domitian, Commodus, Caracalla, Heliogabulus, all coming loaded with chains; they are like to paſs their time no better than ourſelves.

DIALOGUE XLVII.

ANTONIUS PIUS AND MARCUS AURELIUS.

A man ſhould love his family well, but his country better.

MARCUS AURELIUS.

O My father, I ſtand in great need of ſome conſolation from thee. I never

thought I could have felt ſo lively a grief, having been bred in the inſenſible virtue of the Stoics, and eſpecially after deſcending into theſe happy regions, where every thing is ſo quiet.

ANTONIUS.

Alas, my poor ſon! what misfortune is it that troubles thee ſo much? Thy tears are very unbecoming a Stoic. What is the matter, pray?

MARCUS AURELIUS.

Ah! 'tis my ſon Commodus, whom I juſt now beheld: he hath diſhonoured our name that was ſo grateful to the people. A proſtitute has got the wretch murdered by way of prevention; he having marked her down in the liſt of the perſons he was to put to death.

ANTONIUS.

I knew he led an infamous life. But why didſt thou neglect his education? Thou art the occaſion of his wretched fate; he hath much more reaſon to complain of thy neglect, which hath undone him, than thou to complain of his diſorderly courſes.

MARCUS AURELIUS.

I had not leiſure to think of a child, involved as I was always in the multiplicity of the

the affairs of ſo great an empire, or in foreign wars: and yet for all that I took ſome care of him. Alas! had I been a mere private man, I ſhould myſelf have inſtructed and formed my ſon; I ſhould have left him an honeſt man; but I left him too much power to leave him moderation or virtue.

ANTONIUS.

If thou foreſaweſt that empire would ſpoil him, thou ſhouldſt have forbore to make him emperor, both for the ſake of the empire, which needed to be well governed, and for the ſake of thy ſon, who would have made a better figure in a lower ſtation.

MARCUS AURELIUS.

I never foreſaw that he would grow corrupted.

ANTONIUS.

But ſhouldſt thou not have foreſeen it? Did not a father's fondneſs blind thee? As for me, I made choice of a ſtranger in thy perſon to the neglect of all the intereſts of my family. Hadſt thou done as much, thou hadſt not had ſo many vexations; but thy ſon hath reflected as much ſhame upon thee, as thou didſt me honour. Now tell me the truth, ſaweſt thou nothing bad in the youth?

MARCUS AURELIUS.

I ſaw ſome pretty conſiderable faults in him, but I was hopeful he would mend.

ANTONIUS.

That is to ſay, thou wert willing to make a trial, at the empire's coſt. Hadſt thou ſincerely loved thy country beyond thy family, thou wouldſt not have choſe to riſk the public weal, in order to maintain the private grandeur of thy houſe.

MARCUS AURELIUS.

To ſpeak the truth, I never had any other intention, than to prefer the empire to my ſon. But the affection I had for him prevented me from obſerving him ſo narrowly. In my doubts, I inclined to the favourable ſide, and my hopes got the better of my fears.

ANTONIUS.

O what a misfortune it is that the beſt of men ſhould be ſo imperfect; and that having ſo much difficulty to do good, they ſhould ſo frequently commit irreparable evil undeſignedly!

MARCUS AURELIUS.

I ſaw him a genteel fellow, dextrous at all the bodily exerciſes, and environed with wiſe counſellors, who had enjoyed my confidence,

fidence, and were capable to moderate his youth. 'Tis true his natural diſpoſition was fickle, violent, voluptuous.

ANTONIUS.

Kneweſt thou no man in Rome more worthy of the empire of the world?

MARCUS AURELIUS.

I own, there were many; but I thought I might prefer my ſon, provided he was duly qualified.

ANTONIUS.

What ſignified then that language of ſo heroic virtue, when thou wroteſt to Fauſtina; that if Avidius Caſſius was more worthy of the empire than thou and thy family, it was fit he ſhould prevail, and that thy family ſhould periſh with thee. Why didſt thou not follow thoſe generous maxims, when thou cameſt to chuſe a ſucceſſor? Did not thy duty to thy country require thee to prefer the moſt worthy?

MARCUS AURELIUS.

I confeſs I was in the wrong: but the wife whom thou hadſt given me with the empire, and whoſe diſorderly life I bore with out of gratitude to thee, ſuffered me not to keep up to the purity of thoſe maxims. By giving me thy daughter with the empire,

thou didſt commit the firſt fault, of which mine was but the conſequence. Thou madeſt me two preſents, one whereof ſpoiled the other, and ſtopped me from making a right uſe of it. I was unwilling to excuſe myſelf by blaming thee; but thou driveſt me to it. Didſt not thou do the ſame for thy daughter, that thou reproacheſt me with doing for my ſon?

ANTONIUS.

While I reproach thee with thy fault, I am far from diſowning mine: But I had given thee a wife who had no authority: ſhe had nothing but the name of empreſs. Thou couldſt, and thou ſhouldſt have divorced her, according to the laws, when thou foundſt her bad behaviour. In a word, thou oughtſt to have been beyond a woman's importunities. Beſides, ſhe was dead, and thou waſt free, when thou lefteſt the empire to thy ſon. Thou haſt acknowledged the fickle and fiery temper of that youth. He thought of nothing but giving public ſhews, handling the bow, ſhooting wild beaſts, and being as wild as they. He turned gladiator, diſtracted his imagination, going cloathed with nothing but a lion's ſkin, as if he had been Hercules; he plunged into the moſt abominable

bominable vices, and purſued all his ſuſpicions with a ſavage cruelty. O my ſon, forbear thy excuſes! So ſenſeleſs and cruel a fellow could never have deceived a perſon of thy penetration, had not thy fatherly fondneſs weakened thy prudence and virtue.

END OF THE DIALOGUES OF THE ANCIENTS.

DIALOGUES OF THE MODERNS.

DIALOGUE I.

LEGER AND EBROIN.

A ſolitary and private life hath no charms for an ambitious mind.

EBROIN.

THE greateſt comfort to me in my miſfortunes, is to find you in this ſolitude.

LEGER.

And I am ſorry to find you in it; for 'tis of no benefit for a man to be in it againſt his will.

EBRO-

EBROIN.

But why ſhould you deſpair of my converſion? your advice and example may poſſibly mend me. And ſeeing that you are ſo charitable, can you not beſtow ſome of your leiſure hours upon me?

LEGER.

I am ſent hither that I may meddle with nothing; I have enough to do, when I have myſelf to reform.

EBROIN.

How! have you upon entering into ſolitude renounced all charity?

LEGER.

By no means. I ſhall pray for you.

EBROIN.

O! I now ſee it plainly. You give me up as one unworthy of your inſtructions: but you wrong me. I own I came hither againſt my will; but now, that I am come, I am well enough ſatisfied to be here. This deſart is the moſt beautiful I ever ſaw. Do you not admire thoſe rivulets caſcading from the mountains; thoſe craggy rocks, partly covered with moſs: thoſe trees which appear as ancient as the earth they ſtand on? Nature has here a certain ſavage frightfulneſs, which

which is at the ſame time melancholy and pleaſing.

LEGER.

All that is quite inſipid to one who hath a taſte for ambition, and who hath not loſt his paſſion for vain things. The ſoul muſt be in an innocent and peaceful ſtate, before it can be affected with theſe rural beauties.

EBROIN.

But I was weary of the world, and its cares, when I was ſent hither.

LEGER.

It appears you were very weary of it, ſeeing you left it by force.

EBROIN.

I ſhould not have had the courage to leave it voluntarily, and yet I was out of conceit with it.

LEGER.

As out of conceit as you were, you would gladly return to it, and want only to find the means of doing it. I know you well enough; ſo 'tis in vain to diſſemble; confeſs your pain, and be honeſt at leaſt.

EBROIN.

But, holy Prelate, were you and I to return to the helm of affairs, we would do an infinite deal of good. We ſhould ſtand by

one

one another in the defence of virtue, and bear down, in concert, whatever ſhould oppoſe us.

LEGER.

You may truſt yourſelf, as far as you pleaſe, upon your paſt experience; ſeek pretexts to gratify your paſſions. As for me, who have been here longer than you, I have had time to learn diffidence in myſelf, and in the world. That ungrateful world hath once deceived me; but never ſhall deceive me a ſecond time. I endeavoured to do it good, and in return it has done me a great deal of miſchief. I meant to aſſiſt a well-deſigning queen; they turned her authority into contempt, and obliged herſelf to retire. By endeavouring to impriſon me, they have reſtored me to my liberty. Too happy am I to have nothing more to do, but to die peaceably in this deſart.

EBROIN.

But you don't conſider, that, if we will again unite our intereſts, we have it in our power to become abſolute maſters.

LEGER.

Of what? of the ſeas and the winds? no, I have been ſhipwrecked once, and I'll embark no more. Do you go back, and puſh your

your fortune, torment yourſelf, run all hazards, be cut off in the flower of your age! in order to diſturb the world, and to get a name, be unhappy in this life, and damned in the next: you well deſerve it, ſince you cannot be at reſt.

EBROIN.

But is it true that ambition is quite extinguiſhed in your heart?

LEGER.

Would you believe me if I told you?

EBROIN.

I really do not know whether I ſhould, for——

LEGER.

Then I will not tell you. One may as well ſpeak to the deaf. Neither the toils of proſperity, nor the ſucceeding rigours of adverſe fortune, have been able to mend you. Go, return to court, reaſſume the helm, and make both the world and yourſelf unhappy.

DIALOGUE II.

EDWARD THE BLACK PRINCE OF WALES, AND RICHARD HIS SON.

The character of a weak prince.

EDWARD.

ALAS! my dear ſon, I am ſorry to ſee thee ſo ſoon again. I was in hopes that your reign would be long and happy. What has made thy death ſo ſudden? Have you been guilty of the ſame fault that I was, and ruined your health by an exceſs of fatigue in the war againſt France?

RICHARD.

No, father: my health never failed; other misfortunes brought me to my grave.

EDWARD.

How then, has ſome traitor imbrued his hand in your blood? if ſo, England, which has not yet forgot me, will revenge your death.

RICHARD.

Alas! my father, all England has joined together

together to diſhonour, degrade and deſtroy me.

EDWARD.

Heavens! who could have believed it? whom ſhall one henceforth truſt; but did you do nothing to deſerve their hatred; confeſs the truth to your father.

RICHARD.

To my father! they ſay you are not he; and that I am ſon to a canon of Bourdeaux.

EDWARD.

That is what no man can anſwer for; but I cannot believe it. It is not, ſure, your mother's conduct that inſpires the people with ſuch a notion; but it muſt be thine, that makes them ſay ſo.

RICHARD.

They ſaid I prayed like a canon; that I could neither preſerve authority over the people, exerciſe juſtice, nor wage war.

EDWARD.

O my child! and was all that true? It had been better to have led a monk's life at Weſtminſter, than filled the throne with ſo much contempt.

RICHARD.

My intentions were good; I ſet a good example, and ſometimes ſhewed ſpirit enough.

For

For inſtance, I cauſed my uncle, the duke of Glouceſter, to be ſeized and executed, when he was rallying all the malecontents with a deſign to dethrone me, had I not prevented him.

EDWARD.

That was a bold ſtroke, and probably a neceſſary one; for I know my brother to be a diſſembling, artful, enterprizing man, an enemy to lawful authority, and fit to rally a dangerous party. But, my ſon, hadſt thou given him no handle againſt thee; beſides, was that ſtep prudent enough? and didſt thou ſupport it ſtoutly?

RICHARD.

The duke of Glouceſter accuſed me of being too zealous for the French, our nation's enemies. My marriage with the daughter of Charles VI. of France afforded the duke the means of alienating the hearts of the Engliſh from me.

EDWARD.

And did you make yourſelf ſuſpected by your ſubjects, for an alliance with their irreconcileable enemies? And what didſt thou get by that marriage? Haſt thou joined Poictou and Touraine to Guienne, and ſo united

united all our French dominions as far as Normandy?

RICHARD.

No, but I thought it was neceſſary to have a foreign ally, able to take my part againſt the factious Engliſh.

EDWARD.

Unhappy wretch! diſhonour of the royal family! thou goeſt to ſupplicate aid from thine enemies, whoſe great intereſt it ever will be to leſſen thy power. Thou wouldſt eſtabliſh thyſelf on the throne by eſpouſing intereſts contrary to the greatneſs of thy own nation. Not contented with being beloved by thy ſubjects, thou wantedſt to be feared by them, by making alliances with their enemies to oppreſs them. Alas! where are now thoſe happy days, when I put the king of France to flight in the plains of Creſſy, purpled with the blood of thirteen thouſand Frenchmen, and took another king of that nation at the gates of Poictiers! O how times are changed! Well might they take you for a canon's ſon. But who was it dethroned thee?

RICHARD.

The Earl of Derby.

EDWARD.

By what means? did he raiſe an army? did he overthrow you in battle?

RICHARD.

No, a quarrel with the general had forced him to fly into France. The archbiſhop of Canterbury went over ſecretly, and invited him to enter into a conſpiracy. He paſſed through Bretany, arrived at London when I was not there, and found the people ready to revolt. The greateſt part of the rebels took arms: their number amounted to ſixty thouſand. Every aid forſook me; the earl came and found me in a caſtle, where I had ſhut myſelf up. He had the boldneſs to enter almoſt alone; ſo that I might then have killed him.

EDWARD.

Wretch that thou art! Why didſt thou not do it?

RICHARD.

Becauſe the people, that were every where up in arms, would have butchered me.

EDWARD.

And had it not been much better to have died like a valiant man?

RICHARD.

Beſides this, an omen deterred me.

EDWARD.

What was it?

RICHARD.

My bitch, which before would never fawn upon any but myſelf, forſook me inſtantly to fawn upon the earl. I was ſenſible of the meaning of this, and I told the earl my thoughts of the matter.

EDWARD.

Prodigious folly! ſo a dog diſpoſed of thy authority, thy honour, thy life, and decided the fate of all England. What didſt thou then?

RICHARD.

I begged the earl to put me in ſafety from the fury of the people.

EDWARD.

Alas! nothing more was wanting to compleat thy infamy, but to beg thy life of the uſurper. However, did he give it thee?

RICHARD.

Yes, at firſt. He ſhut me up in the Tower, where I might have lived peaceably enough. But my friends did me more miſchief than my enemies; for they attempted to rally, in order to reſcue me from my captivity, and to pull down the uſurper. Then, indeed, he was forced to diſpatch me;

me; but he had no inclination to be guilty of my death.

EDWARD.

A complete misfortune indeed! my ſon was weak and unequal; his want of virtue renders him contemptible; he enters into an alliance with his enemies, and provokes his ſubjects to revolt: he foreſees not the gathering ſtorm: his courage fails the moment he is attacked: he loſes opportunities of deſtroying the uſurper: he cowardly begs his life, and does not obtain it. O heavens! how do you ſport with the glory of princes, and with the proſperity of ſtates! Is this the grandſon of Edward, who overcame Philip, and ravaged his kingdom? Is this the ſon of him who took king John, and made France and Spain tremble?

DIA-

DIALOGUE III.

CHARLES VII. AND JOHN DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

Cruelty and treachery, far from leſſening dangers, rather increaſe them.

BURGUNDY.

NOW that our courſe is finiſhed, and we have no more concern amongſt the living, prithee let us reaſon a little calmly. Why didſt thou cauſe me to be aſſaſſinated? A dauphin to be guilty of ſuch treachery to his own blood, to his couſin, who——

CHARLES.

Who wanted to imbroil every thing, and was like to have deſtroyed France. You wanted to govern me, as you had done the two dauphins, my brothers, before me.

BURGUNDY.

But it was infamous to have me aſſaſſinated!

CHARLES.

To aſſaſſinate was the ſafeſt way.

BUR-

BURGUNDY.

What! In a place whither you had drawn me by the moſt ſolemn promiſes? I entered the barrier (methinks I am there ſtill) with Noailles, brother to the Captal de Buch. The perfidious Taneguy du Chatel inhumanly murders us both.

CHARLES.

You may declaim as much as you pleaſe, couſin; but I ſtand to my firſt maxim; when one has to do with ſo violent and reſtleſs a fellow as you were, aſſaſſinating is the ſafeſt way.

BURGUNDY.

The ſafeſt! you don't conſider, ſure, what you ſay.

CHARLES.

I do conſider, ſure: it is the ſafeſt way, I tell you.

BURGUNDY.

Was it the ſafeſt way, to incur all the dangers into which you plunged yourſelf, by putting me to death? you did yourſelf more miſchief, by cauſing me to be aſſaſſinated, than I could poſſibly have done you.

CHARLES.

There is a great deal to be ſaid for me. If

you had not died, I muſt have periſhed, and France with me.

BURGUNDY.

Was it my intereſt to ruin France? I wanted to govern it, and not to deſtroy or oppreſs it. You had better ſuffered ſomewhat from my jealouſy and ambition. After all, I was of your blood. Having a pretty near proſpect of ſucceeding to the crown, it was not a little my intereſt to maintain its grandeur. I could never have found in my heart to combine againſt France, with the Engliſh, her enemies: but your treachery, and my murder, laid my ſon, though a good-natured man, under a kind of neceſſity to revenge my death, and join the Engliſh. Such was the fruit of your perfidy! It was to form a league of the houſe of Burgundy with the queen, your mother, and with the Engliſh, to overturn the French monarchy. Cruelty and treachery, far from leſſening dangers, increaſe them beyond meaſure, as you may judge from your own experience. My death, by delivering you from one enemy, raiſed you others far more terrible, and put France in a ſituation more deplorable than ever. All the provinces were in a flame: the whole country was a

ſcene

ſcene of plunder, and nothing leſs than miracles could have brought you out of the abyſs whereinto that execrable murder had plunged you. Then, come again, and tell me, with a poſitive air, that to aſſaſſinate is the ſafeſt way.

CHARLES.

I muſt confeſs that your arguments confound me, and I ſee you are a very ſubtle politician: but I ſhall have my revenge by matters of fact. Why do you now think it not good to aſſaſſinate? Did not you aſſaſſinate my uncle, the duke of Orleans? You was not ſo great a philoſopher then, I ſuppoſe, but thought as I do.

BURGUNDY.

Indeed I did; but however, by the ſucceſs of that you may ſee it is not ſafe. Had I let the duke of Orleans live, you would never have meditated my death; and ſo I ſhould have found it my advantage. He, who firſt embarks in ſuch practices, ſhould foreſee that they will land upon himſelf at the laſt. From the hour he makes an attempt upon the lives of others, his own hath not a quarter's ſafety.

CHARLES.

Well, couſin, I ſee we have both been to

blame: I was not indeed aſſaſſinated in my turn, like you, but I involved myſelf in ſtrange perplexities by your death.

DIALOGUE IV.

LEWIS XI. AND THE CARDINAL BESSARION.

A ſcholar is not fit to be at the helm of affairs, and yet much fitter than a great wit, who is enemy to juſtice and honeſty.

CARDINAL, a good morning to you! I ſhall receive you more civilly to-day, than when you came in the Pope's name to ſee me. We ſhall no longer fall out about ceremonials. All ghoſts are here promiſcuous, and incog. ranks are quite confounded here.

BESSARION.

I confeſs I have not yet forgot your injurious treatment, when you took me by the beard, at the very beginning of my ſpeech.

LEWIS.

That Grecian beard ſurprized me; beſides, I wanted

I wanted to cut the ſpeech ſhort, which otherwiſe had been long and ſuperfluous.

BESSARION.

Why ſo? it was a very fine one, I can aſſure you, and compoſed upon the model of Iſocrates, Lyſias, Hyperides, and Pericles.

LEWIS.

I'm acquainted with none of thoſe gentlemen: but you had been to ſee the duke of Burgundy, my vaſſal, before you came to me. Now, it had been much better to have read fewer old fuſty authors, and to have known better the rules of the preſent age. You behaved yourſelf like a pedant, who hath no knowledge of the world.

BESSARION.

Yet I had thoroughly ſtudied the laws of Draco, Lycurgus and Solon, the laws and republic of Plato, all we have extant of the ancient orators, who have governed any people; and, in ſhort, the beſt commentators and ſchoolmen, who have treated of the polity of a commonwealth.

LEWIS.

And I never read any of all thoſe; but I know that a cardinal ſent by the pope, to reſtore the duke of Burgundy to my favour,

ought not to have gone to viſit him before he waited upon me.

BESSARION.

I thought I might follow the Hyſteron Proteron of the Greeks: I knew alſo from philoſophy, that what is firſt in intention, is laſt in execution.

LEWIS.

Let us leave your philoſophy, and come to the point.

BESSARION.

In you I ſee all the barbarity of the Latins, among whom Greece, deſolate ſince the taking of Conſtantinople, vainly attempts to revive wit and learning, and root out ignorance.

LEWIS.

Wiſdom conſiſts in good ſenſe, and not in Greek. Reaſon is to be met with in all languages: you ſhould have obſerved order, and put the lord before the vaſſal. The Greeks you ſo extol were but blockheads, if they did not know what is known by the moſt illiterate of men. But I cannot forbear laughing, when I reflect upon your manner of negotiating. Whenever I did not agree to any of your maxims, all you gave me for argument was ſome paſſage or other out of Sophocles,

Sophocles, Lycophron or Pindar. I ſhould never have remembered their names had they not been eternally quoted by you. If the places on the Somme were in queſtion, you cited me a verſe of Menander or Callimachus. Was I for continuing my alliance with the Swiſs and the duke of Lorrain, againſt the duke of Burgundy, you would prove to me, from Gorgias and Plato, that it was not my true intereſt. When the queſtion was, whether the king of England would be for or againſt me? you quoted me the example of Epaminondas. In ſhort, you quite eaſed me of the grief I was under for having never ſtudied. I often ſaid within myſelf, Happy he who knows nothing of what others have ſaid, and who knows a little what he ought to ſay himſelf.

BESSARION.

The badneſs of your taſte ſurprizes me. I thought you had ſtudied a good deal. I was told, the king, your father, had given you a good preceptor; and that afterwards, when in Flanders at the Duke of Burgundy's, your daily delight was in diſputing with philoſophers.

LEWIS.

I was very young when I left the king my

father, and my preceptor. I went to the court of Burgundy, where trouble and diſquiet reduced me now and then to ſubmit to the hearing of learned men: but I had ſoon enough of them: they were pedantic and crazy like yourſelf: they did not underſtand buſineſs; nor had they any notion of the different characters of men: they knew neither how to diſſemble, to hold their peace, to inſinuate themſelves, to humour the paſſions, to find reſources in difficulties, nor to fathom the deſigns of others: they were vain indiſcreet wranglers, ever dwelling upon words and uſeleſs trifles, full of quibbles, which convince no-body, incapable of learning how to live in the world, or of putting a conſtraint upon themſelves. Such animals are not to be born with.

BESSARION.

I own that ſcholars are not over fit for action, becauſe they love the repoſe of the muſes: nor can they eaſily conſtrain themſelves, or diſſemble, they being above the groſs paſſions of man, and the flattery which tyrants require.

LEWIS.

Away, long-beard, thou pedant, briſtling with

with Greek; thou loſeſt the reſpect that is due to me.

BESSARION.

I owe you none. The ſage, according to the Stoics, is more a king than ever you were, both in dignity and power. You never, like the wiſe man, had the command of your paſſions: beſides, you now have but a ſhadow of royalty. Between ghoſt and ghoſt, I am as good as you.

LEWIS.

Mark the inſolence of the old pedant!

BESSARION.

I would yet rather be a pedant than a knave, and the tyrant of mankind: I never put my brother to death, nor detained my ſon in priſon: I uſed neither poiſon nor aſſaſſination to get rid of my enemies: I had no diſmal old age, like that of the tyrants whom Greece ſo much deteſted: but you are to be excuſed; for, with a good deal of wit and vivacity, you give many indications of a ſomewhat diſordered head. It was not for nothing that you were the ſon of a man who had ſtarved himſelf to death, and grandſon to another who had been locked up ſo many years. Your ſon, himſelf, has not a very ſolid head-piece; and it will be no ſmall

happineſs to France, if the crown ſhall, after him, devolve to a more ſenſible branch.

LEWIS.

I muſt own that my head-piece was none of the beſt. I had weak and gloomy viſions, with fits of fury, but I had penetration, courage, a ready wit, talents for winning men's hearts, and advancing my own authority. I knew how to overlook an uſeleſs pedant, and to diſcover uſeful qualities in the meaneſt of my ſubjects: nay, even when languiſhing under my laſt illneſs, I ſtill retained preſence of mind to endeavour a peace with Maximilian. He looked every moment for my death, and endeavoured to ſhift off the concluſion; but, by my private emiſſaries, I raiſed the Ghenteſe againſt him, and obliged him, much againſt his will, to make a treaty of peace with me, wherein he gave me for my ſon, Margaret his daughter, with a dowry of three provinces. This was my maſter-piece in politics in thoſe latter days, when I was thought out of my ſenſes. Away, old pedant, go ſeek your Greeks, who never had ſo much policy in them; go ſeek your mere ſcholars, who can do nothing but read, and talk of their books; who know neither

neither how to deal, nor how to live with men.

BESSARION.

I ſtill prefer a man of learning, who is not fit for buſineſs, and who knows nothing but what he hath read, to a reſtleſs, ſubtle, enterprizing ſpirit, that is an enemy to juſtice and humanity, and confounds all mankind.

DIALOGUE V.

LEWIS XI. AND CARDINAL DE LA BALUE.

A wicked prince teaches his ſubjects to be treacherous and unfaithful.

LEWIS.

HOW dare you, you wretch, appear before me, after having been ſuch a traitor?

BALUE.

Where would you have me go and hide myſelf? Am I not ſufficiently hid in the croud of ghoſts? We are all upon a level here below.

LEWIS.

This language becomes you well, who were a miller's ſon.

BALUE.

To you a mean extraction was meritorious; your companion Triſtan the provoſt, your phyſician Coctier, your barber Oliver were your favourites and firſt miniſters. Janfredy had, before me, obtained the purple by your intereſt. Now, my birth was even almoſt as good as any thoſe gentlemen could pretend to.

LEWIS.

None of them was guilty of ſuch treachery as thou wert.

BALUE.

I cannot tell that; for if they had not been worthleſs fellows, you had neither uſed them ſo well, nor employed them.

LEWIS.

And wherefore do you alledge that I did not make choice of them for their merit?

BALUE.

Becauſe you always hated and ſuſpected merit: becauſe virtue frightened you, and you knew not how to make uſe of it: becauſe you would be ſerved by none but mean ſouls, and ſuch as were ready to go into your

your intrigues, into your cheats, into your cruelties. An honeſt man, who dreaded to cheat, or to do evil, would have been good for nothing to you, who wanted only cheating and miſchief, in order to gratify your boundleſs ambition. Since we muſt ſpeak freely in the land of truth, I confeſs I was a worthleſs fellow; but that was the reaſon why you preferred me to other men. Did I not ſerve you very dexterouſly in mocking the grandees and the people? Did you ever light on a more ſupple knave than myſelf, or fitter for all characters?

LEWIS.

No, it is true: but while you deceived others, in obedience to me, you ſhould not have deceived myſelf. You held a correſpondence with the Pope, in order to make me aboliſh the pragmatic ſanction, contrary to the true intereſts of France.

BALUE.

Pſhaw! you never cared a pin for either France, or its true intereſt, but minded your own only. You wanted to take advantage of the Pope; ſo I did but ſerve you in your own ſauce.

LEWIS.

But it was you who filled my head with theſe

theſe viſionary projects contrary to the intereſt of my crown, to which my own greatneſs was inſeparably joined.

BALUE.

Not at all; I wanted you to ſell the court of Rome, that dirty Pancart, as dear as poſſible. But I'll go farther with you: even ſuppoſe I had cheated you, what had you to ſay to me?

LEWIS.

How, to ſay to you? you are a pleaſant fellow truly! were we amongſt the living, I would clap you up in your cage again.

BALUE.

Oh, I was long enough there already. If you anger me, I ſhall not ſay a word more. Do you know, that I don't greatly dread the fury of a royal ghoſt? How now, you fancy yourſelf ſtill at Pleſſis-les-Tours, with your ruffians about you.

LEWIS.

No, I don't; and 'tis well for you I am not: but, in ſhort, I am reſolved to hear you for the oddity of the thing. Come then, prove to me, by ſolid arguments, that you ought to betray your maſter.

BALUE.

BALUE.

That paradox ſurprizes you; but I ſhall demonſtrate it literally.

LEWIS.

Let us ſee what he will ſay.

BALUE.

Is it not true that a poor miller's ſon, who had never any other education than the court of a great king, ought to follow the maxims that were with one conſent allowed the wiſeſt and beſt?

LEWIS.

There is ſome ſhow of reaſon in what you ſay.

BALUE.

But anſwer, yes or no, without growing angry.

LEWIS.

I dare neither deny a thing that ſeems ſo well founded, nor own it, leſt the concluſions drawn from it ſhould confound me.

BALUE.

I find I muſt take your ſilence for conſent, and ſo I proceed. The fundamental maxim of all your counſels, and which you diffuſed through your whole court, was to do every thing for your own end: you had no regard for the princes of your blood, nor for the queen,

queen, whom you kept in captivity, and at a diſtance; nor for the dauphin, who was educated in ignorance and confinement; nor, in ſhort, for the kingdom itſelf, which you ruined by your rigorous and cruel policy, and the intereſts whereof you ever poſtponed to your jealouſy for tyrannical power. You had no regard even to the moſt truſty favourites and miniſters, whom you employed in deceiving others. You never loved any of them, nor ever truſted them, but in time of need. You endeavoured to deceive them in their turn, as well as the reſt of the world. You were ready to ſacrifice them upon the ſmalleſt ſuſpicion, or for the leaſt advantage. One had never a ſure moment with you. You ſported with men's lives; you loved no body, and yet you would have had every body to love you; you wanted to impoſe on every body; who did you think would give himſelf up to you with ſincerity and real friendſhip, and without intereſt? where ſhould we have learned ſuch diſintereſted fidelity? did you deſerve it? did you expect it? was it poſſible to practiſe it with you, and in your court? was it poſſible to be eight days under your roof with an honeſt and ſincere heart? was not a man

man forced to be a rogue the moment he approached you? was not a man obliged to be a villain to attain your favour, as there was no attaining it but by villany? whoever wanted to preſerve any honour or conſcience, was obliged carefully to avoid your acquaintance; and would have gone to the fartheſt corner of the world, rather than lived in your ſervice. When once a man is a rogue, he is a rogue to all the world. Would you have had a ſoul, which you have corrupted and taught to be treacherous to all mankind, never to have ought but pure and ſpotleſs virtue, but diſintereſted and heroic fidelity to you alone? were you fool enough to think it? did you not lay your account, that all men would do to you, as you did to them? Nay, though one had been good and ſincere to all other men, one would have been forced to become falſe and wicked to you, by betraying you. I therefore did but follow your leſſons and tread in your footſteps: I did but return to you what you gave every day to others: I did but what you expected of me: I did but take for the principle of my conduct the principle you obſerved, as the only one that ought to actuate all men. You would have deſpiſed a man who

had

had any other intereſt at heart than his own. I had no mind to deſerve your contempt; and choſe rather to deceive you, than to be accounted a fool by you.

LEWIS.

I own your reaſoning confounds me; but wherefore did you enter into a league with my brother, the duke of Guienne, and with the duke of Burgundy, my cruelleſt enemy?

BALUE.

It was becauſe they were your moſt dangerous enemies that I combined with them that I might be protected, in caſe you ſhould attempt my death. I knew you would lay your account with my treachery: and that you were capable of believing it without any foundation. I choſe rather to betray you, in order to eſcape your hands, than periſh in your hands upon ſuſpicion, without having betrayed you. In ſhort, I followed your maxims, made myſelf valued by both parties, and got a reward for my ſervices in a time of need, which you would never have willingly granted me in time of peace. This it is, that an ungrateful, diſtruſtful, deceitful prince, who loves nothing but himſelf, muſt expect from his miniſters.

LEWIS.

LEWIS.

And this it is, that a traitor, who ſells his king, muſt expect: the dignity of cardinal protects him from death, but he is kept eleven years in priſon, and ſtript of all his ill-got wealth.

BALUE.

My only fault was, in not deceiving you with due precaution, and in ſuffering my letters to be intercepted. Had I the ſame opportunity again, I would deceive you again, as you deſerve, but ſo cunningly, that you ſhould never diſcover me.

DIALOGUE VI.

LEWIS XI. AND PHILIP DE COMMINES.

The weakneſs and crimes of kings can never be concealed.

LEWIS.

THey ſay that you have written the hiſtory of my life.

COM-

COMMINES.

It is true, Sir, and I have ſpoken of you as a loyal ſervant ſhould do.

LEWIS.

But they tell me that you have related a great many things which I could willingly have diſpenſed with.

COMMINES.

Probably I have; but take it in general I have drawn a very favourable picture of you. Would you have had me an eternal flatterer, inſtead of an hiſtorian?

LEWIS.

You ought to have ſpoken of me like a ſubject loaded with his maſter's favours.

COMMINES.

That is the way to be believed by no body. Gratitude is not the thing looked for in an hiſtory: on the contrary, 'tis that which renders it ſuſpected.

LEWIS.

Why muſt ſome people have ſuch an itch of writing? Can't they let the dead lie, without blaſting their memories?

COMMINES.

Yours was ſtrangely blaſted before I wrote: I endeavoured to ſoften the impreſſions already made: I mentioned all your good

good qualities, and endeavoured to clear you of all odious imputations. What more could I do?

LEWIS.

Either have been ſilent, or defended me in every thing. They ſay you have repreſented all my grimaces and diſtortions, when I talked alone to myſelf, all my intrigues with mean people. They ſay you have expoſed my familiarities with my provoſt, phyſician, barber, and taylor. They ſay you have not forgot my petty devotions, eſpecially towards the latter end of my days; my eagerneſs to amaſs relics, to have myſelf anointed from head to foot with the oil of the holy phial, and to perform pilgrimages, whereby I always pretended to be cured. You have made mention of my little lady of lead, which I uſed to kiſs, whenever I meant to do a wicked deed; in fine, of the croſs of St. Lo, by which I never dared to ſwear without reſolving to keep my oath; becauſe I ſhould have expected to die within the year, had I broke it. Now all this is very ridiculous ſtuff.

COMMINES.

But is not all this true?

LEWIS.

LEWIS.

What if it be; you need not have mentioned it.

COMMINES.

You might have left it undone then.

LEWIS.

But as it was done, you ſhould not have told it.

COMMINES.

When once done, I could not conceal it from poſterity.

LEWIS.

What! may not ſome certain things be concealed?

COMMINES.

And do you think a king can be concealed after his death, as you concealed certain intrigues in your life-time? I ſhould have done no good by my ſilence; and ſhould have hurt my own character. Be ſatisfied that I could have ſaid much worſe, and been believed; and I did not chuſe it.

LEWIS.

And ought not hiſtory to reverence kings?

COMMINES.

Ought not kings to reverence hiſtory and poſterity, whoſe cenſure they never can eſcape? Thoſe who would not be ill ſpoke of, have

have only one way of preventing it; and that is, to behave themſelves well.

DIALOGUE VII.

LEWIS XI. AND CHARLES DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

Wicked men, who have no notion of virtue, by deceiving, and diſtruſting others, come to be deceived themſelves.

LEWIS.

I Am ſorry, couſin, for the misfortunes which happened to you.

BURGUNDY.

You were the occaſion of them, by deceiving me.

LEWIS.

It was your pride and paſſion that deceived you. Have you forgot that I gave you notice of a man's offering me to ſlay you?

BURGUNDY.

I could not believe it: for I fancied that had the thing been true, you would not have

have had honeſty enough to give me notice of it, and that you had invented it purpoſely to put me in fear, by making me ſuſpect all thoſe I employed. Such a trick was quite in character with you; and I could not be much blamed for believing you guilty of it. Who would not have been deceived as well as I, at a time when you ſhewed yourſelf good and ſincere?

LEWIS.

I confeſs that my ſincerity was not often to be truſted: but ſtill it had been better to have truſted me, than the traitor Campobache, who ſold thee for ſix thouſand crowns.

BURGUNDY.

Since policy is out of ſeaſon in Pluto's dominions, I will ſpeak freely to you. We both went upon ſtrange maxims; neither of us had any notion of virtue. In ſuch a ſituation, by diſtruſting every body, one frequently perſecutes good men, and then falls a prey, through a kind of neceſſity to the firſt comer; and this firſt comer is commonly a villain, who inſinuates himſelf by flattery. But, in the main, my temper was better than yours. I was haſty, and ſomewhat ſour in my humour; but I was neither deceitful

deceitful nor cruel like you. Do you remember, that, at the conference of Conflans, you acknowledged to me, that I was quite a gentleman, and that I had honourably kept you the promiſe I had given the archbiſhop of Narbonne?

LEWIS.

Pſhaw! thoſe were only flattering ſpeeches I then made to amuſe you, and to detach you from the other chiefs of the league. I was ſenſible, that whilſt I praiſed you, I might bubble you.

DIALOGUE VIII.

LEWIS XI. AND LEWIS XII.

Generoſity and honeſty are ſurer maxims of policy than barbarity and cunning.

LEWIS XI.

IF I am not miſtaken, there is one of my ſucceſſors. Though ſhades loſe all their majeſty here below, I imagine this may have been ſome king of France; for I perceive the other ſhades pay it reſpect, and ſpeak

French to it. Will you be ſo kind as to tell me who you are?

LEWIS XII.

I am the duke of Orleans, afterwards king, under the name of Lewis XII.

LEWIS XI.

How didſt thou govern my kingdom?

LEWIS XII.

By ways quite different from yours: thou madeſt thyſelf feared; I made myſelf beloved. Thou didſt begin to burden the people; I eaſed them of their burdens, and preferred their repoſe to the glory of conquering my enemies.

LEWIS XI.

You were ignorant, I ſee, of the art of reigning. It was I who acquired my ſucceſſors a boundleſs power; it was I who diſſolved the leagues of princes and lords; it was I who levied immenſe ſums. I diſcovered the ſecrets of others, and knew how to conceal my own. Subtlety, haughtineſs, and ſeverity, are the true maxims of government. I am much afraid that thou haſt ſpoiled all, and that thy ſoftneſs hath ruined my whole work.

LEWIS XII.

The ſucceſs of thy maxims have ſhewn that

that thine were falſe and pernicious. I made myſelf beloved. I lived in peace without forfeiting my honour, ſhedding blood, or ruining my people. Thy memory is odious; mine is honoured. During my life, my ſubjects were faithful to me; after my death they bewail me, and fear they will never get ſo good a king again. When one is ſo great a gainer by generoſity and honeſty, he muſt needs contemn cruelty and cunning.

LEWIS XI.

A fine way of reaſoning this, which thou haſt doubtleſs learned in that long confinement, wherein I am told thou didſt languiſh before thy aſcending the throne.

LEWIS XII.

That confinement was not ſo ſhameful as thine at Peronne. Behold the effect of cunning and deceit! a man gets himſelf nabbed by his enemies: honeſty would never expoſe him to ſo great dangers.

LEWIS XI.

But my cunning delivered me out of the duke of Burgundy's clutches.

LEWIS XII.

Yes, by the power of money, wherewith thou didſt bribe his ſervants; and by ſhame-

fully attending him to the ruin of thy allies, the people of Liege, which thou wert obliged to witneſs.

LEWIS XI.

Have you extended the limits of the kingdom as I did? I annexed to the crown the dutchy of Burgundy, the county of Provence, and even Guienne too.

LEWIS XII.

I underſtand thee; thou kneweſt how to get rid of a brother, in order to inherit his portion. Thou tookeſt advantage of the misfortune of the duke of Burgundy, who was running headlong to his deſtruction. Thou didſt bribe the counſellor of the county of Provence, in order to catch his ſucceſſion. For my part, I am content with having got Bretany by a lawful match with the heireſs of that houſe, whom I loved, and whom I married after thy ſon's death. Beſides, I was leſs intent upon acquiring new ſubjects, than upon making loyal and happy thoſe I had already. I experienced too, by the wars of Naples and Milan, how prejudicial diſtant conqueſts are to a ſtate.

LEWIS XI.

I ſee plainly thou haſt had neither ambition nor genius.

LEWIS XII.

I had none of that falſe and deceitful genius which rendered thee ſo odious, or of that ambition, which places honour in diſregarding ſincerity and juſtice.

LEWIS XI.

Thou talkeſt too much.

LEWIS XII.

'Tis thou that haſt often talked too much. Haſt thou forgot the merchant of Bourdeaux, who ſettled in England, and king Edward, whom thou didſt invite to come to Paris? Farewel.

DIALOGUE IX.

THE CONSTABLE OF BOURBON AND BAYARD.

It is never lawful to take up arms againſt our country.

CONSTABLE.

IS not that Bayard whom I ſee beneath that oak, ſtretched upon the graſs, and diſmally wounded? Yes, it is himſelf. Alas!

I pity him. This day both Vandeneſſe and he have fallen by our arms, who, for their courage, were ornaments of the French. My heart is ſtill touched for my country. But I'll ſtep forward and ſpeak to him. Ah, poor Bayard, 'tis with grief I behold thee in this condition.

BAYARD.

'Tis with grief I behold you too.

CONSTABLE.

I know you are ſorry, that the chance of war has made you fall into my hands; but I will by no means treat you like a priſoner. I will keep you as a good friend, and take as much care of your wounds, as if you were my own brother. Why then do you grieve to ſee me?

BAYARD.

Ah, do you think I am not ſorry to lie under an obligation to France's greateſt enemy? 'Tis neither my captivity, nor my wound, that gives me pain. I ſhall die in a few moments; and death will inſtantly ſet me free.

CONSTABLE.

No, my dear Bayard; I hope my endeavours will prove ſucceſsful towards your recovery.

BAYARD.

I deſire it not; and am content to die.

CON-

CONSTABLE.

What ails thee then? Art thou inconſolable for being vanquiſhed, and made priſoner in Bonivet's retreat? It is not thy fault, but his. The fortune of arms is variable. Your glory is ſufficiently eſtabliſhed by thy great actions. The imperialiſts will never forget the vigorous defence of Meziers againſt them.

BAYARD.

For my part, I can never forget that you are that high conſtable, that prince of the nobleſt blood in the world, who is labouring with his own hands to deſtroy his country, and the kingdom of his anceſtors.

CONSTABLE.

What, Bayard, do you condemn me while I praiſe you? inſult me, whilſt I pity?

BAYARD.

I return your pity, and think you need it moſt. I leave the world with a ſpotleſs character. I have ſacrificed my life to my duty; I die for my king and my country, eſteemed by the enemies of France, and regretted by all true Frenchmen. My condition challenges envy rather than pity.

CONSTABLE.

But I am victorious over an enemy who

hath affronted me. I revenged myſelf of him; I drove him out of the Milaneſe; and made all France feel her misfortune in having loſt me, by her ſo provoking me: calleſt thou this a ſituation to be pitied?

BAYARD.

Yes, a man is always to be pitied when he acts contrary to his duty; 'tis better to fall fighting for one's country, than to conquer and triumph over her. Ah! how horrid is the glory of him who deſtroys his native country!

CONSTABLE.

But after all the ſervices I had done my country it proved ungrateful. The ducheſs of Orleans cauſed me to be unworthily treated out of a love-pique. The king, through weakneſs for her, did me an heinous piece of injuſtice. I was not only deprived of my eſtate, but of my moſt faithful ſervants, Matignon and Argouges, who were taken from me; and I was forced to fly for my life almoſt alone: now what wouldſt thou have had me done?

BAYARD.

Why, to have ſuffered any thing rather than have betrayed France, and the greatneſs of your own houſe. If the perſecution was too

too violent, you might have retired: but you had better been poor, unknown, uſeleſs, than have taken up arms againſt us. Your glory had been complete in poverty, or in the moſt miſerable exile.

CONSTABLE.

But do you not ſee that revenge joined ambition, in order to drive me to this extremity? I wanted to make the king repent his ill uſage of me.

BAYARD.

That you ſhould have done by a patience proof to all attacks, which is no leſs the virtue of a hero than courage.

CONSTABLE.

But did the king, who was ſo unjuſt, and ſo blinded by his mother, deſerve that I ſhould have ſuch a regard for him?

BAYARD.

If the king did not deſerve it, France did. Nay, the dignity of the crown, to which you were one of the neareſt heirs, deſerved it. You owed to yourſelf to ſpare France, whoſe king you might poſſibly one day have become.

CONSTABLE.

Well, I was to blame, I confeſs; but

knoweſt thou not how difficult it is for the beſt hearts to ſtifle their reſentments?

BAYARD.

I know it well: but true courage conſiſts in ſtifling them. If you know your fault, make haſte to repair it: as for me, I die, and think myſelf happier than you in your proſperity. Although the emperor ſhould not deceive you; though he ſhould even give you his ſiſter in marriage, and ſhare France with you; he would never efface the ſtain that blemiſhes your life. The conſtable of Bourbon a rebel! Ah! what foul diſgrace! Hear what dying Bayard ſays to you, who, as during his lifetime, ſo, at his death, ſpeaks with truth and ſincerity.

DIA-

DIALOGUE X.

LEWIS XII. AND FRANCIS I.

A king had far better be the father of his country, by governing his kingdom peaceably, than be a great conqueror.

LEWIS XII.

DEAR couſin, tell me ſome news of France. I always loved my ſubjects as if they had been my children. I confeſs I am under great concern for them now. You were very young in every reſpect when I left you the crown. How have you governed my poor kingdom?

FRANCIS I.

I have met with ſome misfortunes; but if you would have me be free with you, my reign has made France more ſplendid than ever yours did.

LEWIS XII.

Good God! 'twas that ſplendour I always dreaded; I knew you from your infancy to be of a diſpoſition to ruin the finances, to

hazard every thing for war, to bear nothing with patience, to ſubvert all order within the ſtate, and to create all manner of confuſion, on purpoſe to be talked of.

FRANCIS I.

Old people are always thus prejudiced againſt their ſucceſſors; but, let me tell you, I maintained a dreadful war againſt Charles V. emperor of Germany, and king of Spain. In Italy I gained the famous battles of Marignan over the Swiſs, and of Cheriſoles over the Imperialiſts. I ſaw the king of England confederated with the emperor againſt France, and I rendered their joint efforts ineffectual: I cultivated the ſciences: I deſerved to be immortalized by men of letters: I revived the Auguſtan age in my court. I there introduced magnificence, politeneſs, erudition and gallantry. Till my time every thing was rude, poor, ignorant, and truly Gauliſh; in fine, I got myſelf ſtiled the father of learning.

LEWIS XII.

That was noble; and I would by no means leſſen the glory of it: but ſtill I had rather you had been father of the people, than father of learning. Have you left the French in peace and plenty?

FRAN-

FRANCIS I.

No; but my ſon, who is young, will carry on the war; and it will fall to his ſhare at length to eaſe the exhauſted people. You ſpared them more than I have done; but then you carried your war but very faintly on.

LEWIS XII.

What great ſucceſs have you had in it? What conqueſts have you made? Did you take the kingdom of Naples?

FRANCIS I.

No; I had other expeditions to perform.

LEWIS XII.

You have preſerved the Milaneſe at leaſt!

FRANCIS I.

Some unforeſeen accidents unluckily befel me.

LEWIS XII.

What accidents? Has Charles V. taken it from you? Have you loſt any battle? Speak; thou dareſt not tell all.

FRANCIS I.

I was taken in the battle of Pavia.

LEWIS XII.

Taken! alas, into how many misfortunes hath evil counſel plunged you! 'Tis thus then you ſurpaſſed me in war. You have re-involved

re-involved France in the miſeries ſhe ſuffered under king John. O poor France, how do I pity thee! I plainly foreſaw it. Well, I underſtand you, you have been fain to part with whole provinces, and to pay immenſe ſums. Such is the upſhot of that pride, that haughtineſs, that raſhneſs, that ambition! And how goes the adminiſtration of juſtice?

FRANCIS I.

It ſtood me in great ſtead, for I ſold all the offices.

LEWIS XII.

And the judges, to reimburſe themſelves, muſt ſell all their ſentences. But was all this money you raiſed duly applied towards raiſing and maintaining the army with oeconomy?

FRANCIS I.

A part of it was requiſite for the magnificence of my court.

LEWIS XII.

I'll engage your miſtreſſes have had a greater ſhare of it than the beſt officers of the army; inſomuch that the people are ruined; war ſtill flaming; juſtice become venal; the court given up to all the follies of gallantiſh women; in ſhort, the whole ſtate

ſtate in a miſerable condition. Such is that ſhining reign which hath ſo far eclipſed mine. Had you uſed a little more moderation you would have been far more honourable.

FRANCIS I.

But I have done ſeveral great things which have made me extolled as a hero: I am called the great king Francis.

LEWIS XII.

That is, you have been flattered for your money; and you were willing to be a hero at the expence of the ſtate, whoſe proſperity ſhould have been your greateſt glory.

FRANCIS I.

The praiſes beſtowed on me were ſincere.

LEWIS XII.

Ah! was there ever any king ſo weak or ſo corrupt, as not to have had as many praiſes given him as you received? Shew me the moſt unworthy of all princes, and I ſhall ſhew him as highly extolled as ever you were. After that, purchaſe praiſe, if you chooſe it, at the price of ſo much blood, and of ſuch ſums of money as have ruined a kingdom.

FRANCIS I.

I had the glory, however, of bearing my misfortunes with conſtancy and courage.

LEWIS

LEWIS XII.

It would have been much better for you to have wanted an opportunity of displaying that conſtancy. The people wanted no ſuch heroiſm. But did not the hero grow weary of his priſon?

FRANCIS I.

Yes indeed, and my liberty coſt me very dear.

DIALOGUE XI.

CHARLES V. OF FRANCE, AND A YOUNG MONK OF ST. JUST.

Diſquiet often obliges us to ſeek ſolitude, which thoſe who are accuſtomed to the noiſe and hurry of the world can never reliſh.

CHARLES.

COME, brother, 'tis time to ariſe; you ſleep too long for a young novice, who ought to be vigilant and fervent.

MONK.

When would you have me ſleep, but whilſt I am young? Sleep is not inconſiſtent with fervour.

CHARLES.

CHARLES.

When a perſon loves the ſervice, he is ſoon awaked.

MONK.

Yes, at your majeſty's age; but at mine, people can ſleep without a feather-bed.

CHARLES.

Well then, brother, it belongs to people of my age to awaken thoſe who overſleep themſelves.

MONK.

And have you got nothing better to do after ſo long diſturbing the whole world's repoſe? Can you not leave me to mine?

CHARLES.

I think that in this ſolitude we enjoy repoſe enough, though we ſhould riſe betimes.

MONK.

I underſtand your ſacred majeſty; when you get up early here, you find the day wondrous long, having been accuſtomed to greater motions: Come, own it freely; you are weary of having nothing here to do but to pray, to wind up your clocks, and to wake poor novices, who have no ſhare in the cauſe of your uneaſineſs.

CHARLES.

CHARLES.

I have yet twelve ſervants which I reſerved myſelf.

MONK.

A poor converſation theirs for a man who correſponded with all the nations of the known world.

CHARLES.

I have a little horſe to ride out upon in this beauteous valley, which is adorned with oranges, myrtles, pomegranates, laurels, and with a thouſand different flowers, and in which ſo many bleating flocks are grazing.

MONK.

All theſe are fine things, but none of them ſpeak. You want a little noiſe and buſtle.

CHARLES.

I have a penſion of an hundred thouſand crowns.

MONK.

And poorly paid. The king your ſon is not very punctual.

CHARLES.

'Tis true that people, who have ſtript and degraded themſelves, are very ſoon forgot.

MONK.

MONK.

Did you not expect this, when you parted with your crown?

CHARLES.

I foreſaw what would happen.

MONK.

If you expected it, why do you wonder to ſee it happen? Keep to your firſt reſolution: renounce all things; forget all things; no longer deſire any thing; be at reſt yourſelf, and let others be at reſt with you.

CHARLES.

But my ſon has made no good uſe of the victory he obtained at St. Quintin: he ſhould have been before the gates of Paris by this time. The count d'Egmont has gained him another battle at Gravelines, and he is loſing all his advantages. There is Calais retaken from the Engliſh by the duke of Guiſe. The ſame duke hath taken Thionville, in order to cover Metz. Ah! my ſon governs badly: he follows none of my counſels: he pays me not my penſion: he deſpiſes my conduct, and the moſt faithful ſervants I employed. All this vexes and diſquiets me.

MONK.

And did you come to ſeek repoſe in this ſolitude, only upon condition, that the king, your

your ſon, ſhould make conqueſts, ſhould follow your counſels, and execute all your projects?

CHARLES.

No; but I was in hopes he would have behaved better.

MONK.

Since you have abandoned all for the ſake of tranquillity, enjoy it, whatever happens; let the king, your ſon, do as he will: make not your tranquillity to depend upon the wars, which torment the world. You left it for no other end, but to hear no more of it. But, ſay the truth, you knew very little about retirement when you firſt ſought it. It was through diſquiet, that you deſired repoſe.

CHARLES.

Alas, my child, you are very right, and I heartily wiſh that you may not be miſtaken in your deſign, when you renounced the world, to come and be a novice here.

DIALOGUE XII.

CHARLES V. OF SPAIN, AND FRANCIS I. OF FRANCE.

Juſtice and happineſs conſiſt in honeſty, courage and uprightneſs.

CHARLES V.

THE buſineſs of life is now over, and it would be but reaſonable that we ſhould come to an eclairciſſement concerning the vexations we have given each other.

FRANCIS I.

You have dealt very unjuſtly and deceitfully by me. I never did you any harm but in fair and open war: but you extorted from me, while I was in confinement, the homage of the county of Flanders: the vaſſal employed force to give laws to his maſter.

CHARLES V.

You had the liberty of not renouncing your title, if you pleaſed.

FRANCIS I.

Has any man his liberty in priſon?

CHARLES

CHARLES V.

Cowards have not; but when a perſon has true courage, he is free every where. If I had aſked your crown of you, would your impatience of confinement have reduced you to yield it up to me?

FRANCIS I.

No, doubtleſs: I would ſooner have died than been guilty of ſo baſe an action; but, as for the dependency of the county of Flanders, I gave it up to you through wearineſs of captivity; through fear of being poiſoned; through a deſire of returning to my kingdom, where every thing ſtood in need of my preſence; in fine, by reaſon of my languiſhing ſtate, which threatened me with approaching death: and I really believe I ſhould have died had not my ſiſter come to me.

CHARLES V.

Not only a brave king, but a true ſoldier, would rather die than give a promiſe, unleſs he reſolved to keep it, at whatever coſt. Nothing is ſo ſhameful as to ſay one has not had courage to ſuffer; and that a man has delivered himſelf by forfeiting his honour. If you were perſuaded that it was unlawful for you to ſacrifice the dignity of your dominions

minions to the liberty of your perſon, you ſhould have had the reſolution to die in captivity; you ſhould have ſent orders to your ſubjects no longer to reckon upon you, and to crown your ſon: by ſo doing, you would have confounded me vaſtly. A priſoner who has courage enough to do this, ſets himſelf at liberty even in his priſon, and eſcapes out of the hands of thoſe who detain him.

FRANCIS I.

Thoſe maxims are juſt. I acknowledge that wearineſs and impatience made me promiſe what was contrary to the intereſt of my dominions, and what I could neither execute nor elude with honour. But is it your part to make me ſuch a reproach? was not your whole life one continued breach of faith? beſides, my weakneſs does by no means excuſe you: a man of intrepidity, 'tis true, will rather ſuffer death than promiſe any thing he cannot perform: but a juſt man will never abuſe the weakneſs of another, ſo as to extort from him, in his captivity, a promiſe which he neither can nor ought to perform. What would you have done, had I detained you in France, when you paſſed through there, ſometime after my confinement, in your way to the Low Countries?

I might

I might have demanded of you the ceſſion of the Netherlands and of the Milaneſe, which you had uſurped from me.

CHARLES V.

I had your promiſe, that I ſhould paſs ſafely through France; but you had not mine, that you ſhould come freely into Spain.

FRANCIS I.

I had not, and ſo far the difference, I confeſs, is great. But as you had dealt ſo unjuſtly by me whilſt in priſon, by forcing me to a diſadvantageous treaty, I might have repaired that injury, by forcing you, in my turn, to another more equitable: beſides, I might have detained you with me, 'till ſuch time as you had reſtored me the Milaneſe, which was lawfully my own.

CHARLES V.

Hold; you join ſeveral things together, which I muſt ſeparate. I never broke my word to you at Madrid; and you would have broke yours to me at Paris, had you arreſted me upon any pretence of reſtitution, how juſt ſoever it might have been: it was in your power to have demanded reſtitution, as a preliminary to my paſſage: but, as you did not demand it, you could not exact it in

in France, without violating your word of honour: beſides, do you think it lawful to repel fraud by fraud? if one deceit ſhould occaſion another, there is no longer any thing ſure among men; and the fatal conſequences of ſuch a chain extend to infinity. The ſafeſt way of revenging yourſelf on the deceitful, is to repel all his ſtratagems without deceiving him.

FRANCIS I.

What a ſublime philoſophy! this is downright Platoniſm. But I ſee plainly you have managed your matters more ſubtilly than I: my terror lay in truſting you. The conſtable of Montmorency helped to deceive me. He perſuaded me, that I ought to put you upon honour, by granting you to paſs without terms. You had already promiſed to give the inveſtiture of the dutchy of Milan to the youngeſt of my three ſons; but, after your paſſing through France, you retracted your promiſe. If I had not hearkened to Montmorency, I would have made you reſtore the Milaneſe, before I let you paſs into the Netherlands. I never could forgive my favourite this piece of bad counſel, and I baniſhed him court upon it.

CHARLES V.

Rather than reſtore the Milaneſe, I would have croſſed the ſea.

FRANCIS I.

Your health, the ſeaſon, and the dangers of the voyage, would not have permitted you to do that. But, after all, why play upon me ſo unworthily in the face of all Europe, and abuſe the moſt generous hoſpitality?

CHARLES V.

I would have given the dutchy of Milan to your third ſon. A duke of Milan of the houſe of France would have troubled me no more than the other princes of Italy. But your ſecond ſon, for whom you demanded that inveſtiture, was too nearly allied to the crown; there was none betwixt you and him but the dauphin, and he died. Had I given the inveſtiture to the ſecond, he would have found himſelf, at once, king of France, and duke of Milan; and ſo all Italy would have been in ſlavery for ever. This I foreſaw; and this it was my duty to prevent.

FRANCIS I.

It would have been only one ſlavery for another. Had it not been better to have reſtored the Milaneſe to its lawful maſter, which was I, than to have retained it without

out the leaſt appearance of right? The French, who now had not an inch of ground in Italy, were leſs to be dreaded in the Milaneſe, as to the public liberty, than the houſe of Auſtria veſted with the kingdom of Naples, and with the rights of the empire over all the fiefs which hold of it in that country. For my part, I'll tell you freely, all ſubtlety apart, the difference of our two caſes. You had always addreſs enough to put the forms on your ſide, and to overreach me in the main: but, through weakneſs, impatience, or levity, I took not ſufficient precautions, and the forms were generally againſt me. So I was a deceiver only in appearance, and you, without appearing ſuch, were one in reality. As for me, I was puniſhed enough for my faults at the time I committed them: for you, I hope the falſe policy of your ſon will ſufficiently revenge me of your unjuſt ambition. He forced you to ſtrip yourſelf of all in your life-time. You died a degraded wretch, who once propoſed to enſlave Europe. That ſon of yours will finiſh his work: his jealouſy and diſtruſt will cruſh all ambition and virtue among the Spaniards. Merit grown ſuſpected and odious will not dare to appear.

Spain will no more have any great captain, nor exalted genius in negotiation, nor military diſcipline, nor good polity amongſt the people. That king ever hid, and inacceſſible like the kings of the Eaſt, will ruin Spain within, and occaſion the revolt of the diſtant nations which hold of that monarchy. That great body will fall by its own weight, and will ſerve only as a monument of the vanity of too great exaltation. A ſtate at unity in itſelf, though of but a moderate extent, when well peopled, well ordered, and well cultivated in uſeful arts and ſciences; when, moreover, it is governed, according to the laws, with moderation, by a prince who diſtributes juſtice himſelf, and goes to war in perſon, promiſes ſomewhat happier than your monarchy, which now wants an head to re-unite the government. If you will not believe me, wait patiently for the coming of ſome of your great-grand-children, who will inform you better.

CHARLES V.

Alas! I am but too ſenſible of the truth of your predictions. The proſpect of thoſe misfortunes that will overthrow all my ſchemes made me quit the reins of empire, and

and disquieted me even in my solitary retirement.

DIALOGUE XIII.

HENRY III. OF FRANCE, AND THE DUCHESS OF MONTPENSIER.

One may keep in with the different parties and humours of a state, without being either an hypocrite or a knave.

HENRY.

GOod-morrow, cousin: I hope we are friends, after death?

MONTPENSIER.

By no means. I cannot forgive your massacres, and especially the blood of my family, which you have so cruelly shed.

HENRY.

You upbraid me with things which did you less mischief than your confederacy in Paris did me: so let us balance accounts, and be good friends.

MONTPENSIER.

No; I ſhall never be a friend to a man who ordered the horrid maſſacre of Blois.

HENRY.

But the duke of Guiſe had provoked me to the laſt degree. Have you forgot the barricade-day, when he would needs be king of Paris, and drove me from the Louvre? I was obliged to ſave myſelf through the Tuilleries and the convent of the Feuillants.

MONTPENSIER.

But he had made up matters with you through the mediation of the queen mother. They ſay you had communicated with him, both breaking the ſame hoſt; and that you had ſworn his preſervation.

HENRY.

My enemies have advanced many other things without proof, to give the greater ſanction to the league; but, in ſhort, I could no longer have been king, had not your brother periſhed.

MONTPENSIER.

That is, you could not reign, without deceiving and butchering people. Strange ways of maintaining authority! why ſign the union? why cauſe it to be ſigned by every body at the ſtates of Blois? you ſhould have made

made a ſtout reſiſtance; that was the true way of being king. Royalty, rightly underſtood, conſiſts in holding faſt by reaſon, and making one's ſelf obeyed.

HENRY.

But I was obliged to oppoſe cunning and policy to force.

MONTPENSIER.

You wanted to ſoothe both the Hugonots and Catholics; and ſo rendered yourſelf contemptible to both.

HENRY.

No, I did by no means endeavour to ſoothe the Hugonots.

MONTPENSIER.

The queen's conferences with them, and the pains you took to flatter them, whenever you wanted to counterbalance the union-party, rendered you ſuſpected by all the Catholics.

HENRY.

But did I not, upon all occaſions, endeavour to ſhew my zeal for religion?

MONTPENSIER.

Yes, by a thouſand ridiculous grimaces, which were belied by ſo many ſcandalous actions. To go in maſquerade of a Shrove-Tueſday, and on Aſh-Wedneſday to the pro-

ceſſion in a penitent's ſackcloth, with a great whip in your hand; from your girdle to dangle a ſwinging chaplet an ell long, with beads like ſo many little Death's heads, and at the ſame time to ſuſpend from a ruban at your neck a baſket full of little Spaniels, whoſe maintenance coſt you an hundred thouſand crowns; to ſpend one part of your life in brotherhoods, vows, pilgrimages, oratories, with Feuillants, Minims, and Jeromites brought from Spain; and the other with your infamous minions: to be ever carving and paſting of images, and diving at the ſame time into the curioſities of magic, into the impiety and policy of Machiavel: in fine, to run at the ring like a woman; to treat your minions with repaſts ſerved by naked women with diſhevelled hair; and then to play the devotee, every where hunting after hermitages! what inconſiſtency! and indeed they ſay Miron your phyſician aſſured, that the malignant humour, which occaſioned ſo many extravagant oddities, would ſoon either kill you, or make you run mad.

HENRY.

All that was neceſſary in order to humour different tempers. I indulged the debauch-

ed

ed in pleaſures, and was godly with the devotees, in order to poſſeſs both.

MONTPENSIER.

And very well you poſſeſſed them. 'Twas that made people ſay you were good for nothing but to be clipt for a monk.

HENRY.

I have by no means forgot thoſe ſciſſars you ſhewed every body, ſaying you wore them to clip me.

MONTPENSIER.

You had affronted me enough to deſerve that inſult.

HENRY.

But, after all, what could I do? I had to pleaſe all parties.

MONTPENSIER.

It is not pleaſing them, to betray weakneſs, diſſimulation and hypocriſy on all ſides.

HENRY.

So you may talk at your eaſe. But one ſtands in need of a great many people, when he finds ſo many ready to revolt.

MONTPENSIER.

Behold your couſin the king of Navarre, and ſee the difference between you. You found your kingdom entirely in ſubjection,

and you left it involved in a civil war. He, without diſſimulation, maſſacre, or hypocriſy, hath conquered the whole kingdom which refuſed to acknowledge him; he kept the Hugonots in his intereſt, though he quitted their religion. He won the hearts of all the Catholics, and diſſolved the powerful league. Think not to excuſe yourſelf; things are to be eſtimated by the effects they are made to produce.

DIALOGUE XIV.

HENRY III. AND HENRY IV.

The difference between a king, who, by barbarity and cunning, makes himſelf feared and hated, and a king who makes himſelf beloved by his ſincerity and diſintereſtedneſs.

HENRY III.

WELL, couſin, you are fallen into the ſame misfortune with myſelf.

HENRY IV.

My death was violent as well as yours: but none regretted you ſave your minions; and

and that becauſe of the immenſe wealth you ſo profuſely laviſhed upon them. As for me, every family in France deplored me, as their general father. I ſhall in after-ages be propoſed as a model of a good and wiſe king. I began to eſtabliſh peace, plenty, and good order in the kingdom.

HENRY III.

When I was ſlain at Saint-Cloud, I had already broken the confederacy; and Paris was on the point of ſurrendering; ſo that I ſhould ſoon have recovered my former authority.

HENRY IV.

But how could you recover your blackened reputation? you were accounted a knave, an hypocrite, a profane, effeminate, and diſſolute perſon. When once a man has loſt the reputation of probity and honour, he never hath a quiet and ſecure authority. You got rid of the two Guiſes at Blois, but you could never get rid of all thoſe who abhorred your deceits.

HENRY III.

And do you not know, that the art of diſſembling is the art of reigning?

HENRY IV.

Fine maxims! inſtilled I ſuppoſe by Du-

guaſt. The abbot of Elbene, and the other Italians, had filled your head with the politics of Machiavel. The queen your mother had trained you up in thoſe notions; but ſhe found good reaſon to repent it: ſhe met with what ſhe deſerved: ſhe had taught you to be unnatural; and unnatural you proved to her.

HENRY III.

But how can one act ſincerely, and confide in men, ſeeing that they are all ſo diſguiſed and corrupted?

HENRY IV.

You think ſo, becauſe you never ſaw honeſt men, and do not think there can be any ſuch in the world; but you did not ſeek after them; on the contrary, you ſhunned them, and they ſhunned you; they were ſuſpicious and obnoxious to you. You wanted only villains, who could invent you new pleaſures, execute the blackeſt crimes, and in whoſe company nothing ſhould put you in mind of either violated religion or virtue. With ſuch morals 'tis impoſſible to find men of worth. As for me, I found ſome: I knew how to employ them in my council, in foreign negotiations, in divers

capaci-

capacities; for inſtance, Sully, Jeannin, d'Oſſat, and others.

HENRY III.

To hear you talk, one would take you for a Cato; but your youth was as irregular as mine.

HENRY IV.

'Tis true, I was inexcuſable in my ſhameful paſſion for the women; but, in all my irregularities, I was never either a deceitful, wicked, or impious perſon; I was only weak. Misfortunes proved of great ſervice to me; for I was naturally lazy, and too much addicted to pleaſure. Had I been born to the throne, I ſhould have, perhaps, diſhonoured myſelf; but ill fortune to overcome, and my kingdom to conquer, obliged me to ſoar above myſelf.

HENRY III.

How many fine opportunities did you loſe of overcoming your enemies, while you loitered on the banks of the Garonne, and ſighed for the counteſs of Guiche? you were like Hercules at Omphale's diſtaff.

HENRY IV.

I cannot deny it: but then Coutras, Yvry, Arques, Fontaine-Françoiſe make ſome amends for this.

HENRY

HENRY III.

And did not I win the battles of Jarnac and Moncontour?

HENRY IV.

You did; but king Henry III. ill ſupported the hopes that had been conceived of the duke of Anjou. Henry IV. on the contrary, excelled the king of Navarre.

HENRY III.

Then you think I never heard of the ducheſs of Beaufort, of the marchioneſs of Verneuil, of the—? but there are ſo many of them, I cannot enumerate them all.

HENRY IV.

I diſown none of them, and ſtand condemned; but I made myſelf both beloved and feared. I abhorred that cruel and deceitful policy with which you were ſo poiſoned, and which occaſioned all your misfortunes. I made war with vigour. Abroad I concluded a laſting peace; at home I regulated the ſtate, and rendered it flouriſhing. I reduced the nobles to their duty; nay, even the moſt inſolent favourites: and all this without deceiving, without butchering, without doing any injuſtice, confiding in honeſt men, and placing all my glory in eaſing my people.

DIALOGUE XV.

HENRY IV. AND THE DUKE OF MAYENNE.

Adverſe fortune makes kings good, and heroes great.

HENRY.

COUSIN, I have forgot all that is paſt, and am very glad to ſee you.

MAYENNE.

Your majeſty is too kind in paſſing over my faults thus. There is nothing I would not do to efface the remembrance of them.

HENRY.

Let us take a turn in that walk betwixt the two canals; and we'll talk over affairs.

MAYENNE.

With pleaſure I will follow your majeſty.

HENRY.

Well, couſin, I am no longer that poor Berneſe they wanted to expel the kingdom. Do you remember the time when we were at Arques, and you ſent word to Paris, that you had driven me to the ſea-ſide; and that I had

I had now no way to eſcape, but by plunging into the waters?

MAYENNE.

It is true; but it is alſo true, that you were upon the point of ſubmitting to your adverſe fortune; and that you would have retreated into England, had not Biron repreſented to you the conſequences of ſuch a flight.

HENRY.

You ſpeak freely, couſin; nor do I take it amiſs. Go on, and with the ſame freedom ſay whatever you think fit.

MAYENNE.

I have, perhaps, ſaid too much: for kings don't chuſe to have things called by their right names. They are ſo uſed to flattery, that they make it a part of their dignity. The honeſt freedom with which we ſpeak to other men offends them; they will not have us to open our mouths but in their praiſe and admiration. We muſt not treat them like men, but always ſay they are heroes.

HENRY.

You ſpeak ſo knowingly, that 'tis plain you have had ſome experience. Thus probably you were flattered and adored, while you were king of Paris.

MAYENNE.

MAYENNE.

It is true, I was amuſed with abundance of idle flatteries, which fed me with falſe hopes, and made me commit ſome great faults.

HENRY.

For my part, I was inſtructed by my adverſe fortune: ſuch leſſons are hard, but wholeſome; and I ſhall ever retain ſo much good from them, as to be more willing than any body to hear truth concerning myſelf. Therefore, dear couſin, if you love me, ſpeak it freely.

MAYENNE.

All our miſtakes proceeded from the idea we had formed of you in your youth; we knew the ladies were your conſtant amuſement; that the counteſs of Guiche had made you loſe all the advantages of the battle of Coutras; that you had been jealous of your couſin the prince of Conde, who ſeemed more ſteady, more ſerious, and more aſſiduous than you in application to public affairs, and who had a good underſtanding and great virtue. We looked upon you as a ſoft and effeminate perſon, whom the queen-mother had deceived by a thouſand love-intrigues, who had done any thing required

of

of him at Bartholomew-tide, towards the innovation of religion; who had alſo ſubmitted, after the conſpiracy of La Mole, to whatever the court had a mind. In ſhort, we hoped to have an eaſy purchaſe of you ——but really, Sir, I cannot go on: I'm all in a ſweat, and out of breath; your majeſty is as light and clever as I am fat and unwieldy. I can no longer keep pace with you.

HENRY.

I own, couſin, I endeavoured to tire you; but it is the only miſchief I ſhall ever do you in my life. So make an end, pray, of what you have begun.

MAYENNE.

You ſurprized us very much, when we ſaw you on horſeback, night and day, performing actions with an incredible vigour and diligence, at Cahors, at Lauſe in Goſcony, at Arques in Normandy, at Yvry before Paris, at Arnay-le Duc, and at Fontaine-Françoiſe: thou haſt the art to win the confidence of the Catholics, without loſing the Hugonots; you choſe perſons capable and worthy of your truſt for buſineſs. You conſulted them without jealouſy, and knew how to make uſe of their good counſels,

without

without ſuffering yourſelf to be governed: you were every where before hand with us; you were become quite another man, ſteady, vigilant, laborious, as exact in all your duties as we formerly had thought you otherwiſe.

HENRY.

I ſee that all thoſe bold truths you were to utter end in praiſes. But take along with you what I told you at firſt, which is, that I owe whatever I am to my adverſe fortune. Had I found myſelf preſently upon the throne, ſurrounded with pomp, delights and flatteries, I ſhould have diſſolved in pleaſures; my natural tendency was effeminacy: but I felt the contradiction of men, and became ſenſible of the harm my failings might do me: I found it neceſſary to correct them; to bring myſelf under; to conſtrain myſelf; to follow good counſels; to profit by my faults; to enter into all affairs. This is what was the making of me, and muſt be ſo of every man.

DIA-

DIALOGUE XVI.

HENRY IV. AND SIXTUS V.

Great men love and eſteem one another, let their intereſts be ever ſo oppoſite.

SIXTUS.

I Have for this great while been deſirous of ſeeing you. While we were both living, that was hardly poſſible. Conferences between popes and kings were out of faſhion in our time: but they were not ſo, when Leo. X. and Francis I. had an interview at Bologna; and when Clement VII. met the ſame king at Marſeilles, in order to the marriage of Catharine of Medicis. I ſhould have been overjoyed to have had ſuch a conference with you; but I was not at liberty, nor did your religion allow it me.

HENRY.

How greatly are you ſoftened! Death, I ſee, has brought you to reaſon. Say the truth,

truth, you were not the ſame perſon when I was but the poor excommunicated Berneſe.

SIXTUS.

I will open my mind freely to you now. At firſt, I thought the only way was to proſecute you. I had by this means greatly embaraſſed your predeceſſor; and indeed I made him heartily repent his having dared to cauſe the butchering of a cardinal of the holy church. Had the duke of Guiſe only been put to death, he might have come off eaſier: but to attack the ſacred purple was a crime beyond remiſſion: I could not tolerate an outrage of ſo dangerous conſequence. It appeared to me eſſential, after your couſin's death, to uſe you with the ſame rigour I had done him; to ſpirit up the league, and by all means, to prevent an heritic's aſcending the throne of France: but I ſoon perceived that you would overcome the confederacy, and your courage gave me a good opinion of you. There were two perſons, whom I could not, in any decency, be a friend to, though I naturally loved them both.

HENRY.

And pray who were thoſe two perſons, who had been ſo happy as to pleaſe you?

SIXTUS.

SIXTUS.

Yourſelf and queen Eliſabeth of England.

HENRY.

I do not at all wonder at her pleaſing you; for in the firſt place, ſhe was a pope as well as you, being the head of the church of England; and a pope too as haughty as yourſelf. She had the knack of getting herſelf feared, and of making heads fly upon occaſion: 'tis this, doubtleſs, that acquired her your eſteem.

SIXTUS.

It did her no harm; I love people of ſpirit, and ſuch as know how to make themſelves maſters of others. The merit I diſcovered in you, and which won my affection, was your having defeated the league, managed the nobility, and kept the balance between the Catholics and Hugonots. A man who can do all this is really a man; and I don't deſpiſe him, as I did his predeceſſor, who ruined every thing by his ſoftneſs, and retrieved himſelf only by knavery. Had I lived, I would have received you to abjuration, without making you languiſh. You ſhould have got off for a little ſcourging of yourſelf, and a few gentle laſhes, and declaring

ring that you received the crown of France from the bounty of the holy ſee.

HENRY.

I would have begun the war again, rather than have made any ſuch acknowledgment.

SIXTUS.

I like this boldneſs of yours: but it was for want of being ſufficiently ſupported by my ſucceſſors, that you were expoſed to ſo many conſpiracies, which ended in your deſtruction.

HENRY.

True; but were you ſpared yourſelf? the Spaniſh cabal treated you no better than me; there is no great difference between a dagger and a bowl of poiſon. But let us go and pay a viſit to that worthy queen you are ſo fond of; ſhe found means to reign longer and more peaceably than any of us.

DIA-

DIALOGUE XVII.

CARDINAL RICHLIEU AND CARDINAL XIMENES.

Virtue is preferable to illuſtrious birth.

XIMENES.

NOW that we are together, I conjure you to tell me if it be true that you endeavoured to imitate me.

RICHLIEU.

No; I was too deſirous of true glory ever to copy after any man. I always ſhewed a bold and original genius.

XIMENES.

I heard you had taken Rochelle, as I had Oran; overthrew the Hugonots, as I overthrew the Moors of Granada, in order to convert them; protected learning, humbled the pride of the nobility, raiſed the royal authority, eſtabliſhed the Sorbonne like my univerſity of Alcala de Hennara; and that you were promoted by the intereſt of Queen Mary

Mary of Medicis, as I had been by that of Iſabel of Caſtile.

RICHLIEU.

There is ſome reſemblance, I own, between us, all owing to pure chance; but I had no model in my view. I contented myſelf with doing things as time and circumſtances offered for the glory of France: beſides, our ſtations were very different. I was born at court; and had been bred there from a child. I was biſhop of Lucon, and ſecretary of ſtate, nearly attached to the queen, and the marſhal d'Ancre. All this has nothing in common with an obſcure and friendleſs monk, who enters not into the world, and upon affairs, till he was ſixty years of age.

XIMENES.

Nothing does me more honour, than my entering ſo late upon them. I never had ambitious or ſanguine views. My life was far ſpent, and I thought to have finiſhed it in the cloiſter; but the cardinal de Mendoza, archbiſhop of Toledo, made me confeſſor to the queen; and the queen, prepoſſeſſed in my favour, made me ſucceſſor to that cardinal in the Archbiſhopric of Toledo, contrary to the deſire of the king, who wanted

to get in his baſtard: afterwards I became the queen's chief counſellor in her troubles with regard to the king. After Ferdinand had made the conqueſt of Granada, I undertook the converſion of its inhabitants. The queen died, and I then found myſelf between Ferdinand and his ſon-in-law Philip of Auſtria. I rendered great ſervices to Ferdinand after the death of Philip. I procured the royal authority to the father-in-law. In ſpite of the grandees, I managed affairs with vigour. I conquered Oran, being there in perſon, managing every thing myſelf; having no king there to ſhare the action, as you had at Rochelle, and at the ſtraits of Suſa. After Ferdinand's death, I was regent in young prince Charles's abſence: 'twas I who kept the commons of Spain from commencing the revolt, which happened after my death. I changed the ſecond infant Ferdinand's governor and officers, who wanted to make him king, to the prejudice of his elder brother. At laſt, I died calm and ſerene, having loſt all authority through the artifice of the Flemings, who prejudiced king Charles againſt me. In all this I never made one ſtep towards preferment. Public buſineſs came to me without my ſeeking;

ing; nor had I in the management of them an eye to any thing but the public good. This is more honourable than being born at court, ſon to a grand prevot, and a knight of the order.

RICHLIEU.

An illuſtrious birth does not at all leſſen the merit of great actions.

XIMENES.

It does not. But ſince you urge me, I will tell you, that diſintereſtedneſs and moderation are better than to be high born.

RICHLIEU.

Do you pretend to compare your adminiſtration with mine? Did you change the ſyſtem of the government of all Europe? I overthrew the houſe of Auſtria which you ſerved; I brought into the heart of Germany a victorious king of Sweden, made Catalonia revolt, recovered the kingdom of Portugal which was uſurped by the Spaniards, and filled Chriſtendom with my negotiations.

XIMENES.

I own I muſt not compare my negotiations with yours; but I ſupported all the moſt difficult affairs of Caſtile with ſteadineſs,

without intereſt, ambition, vanity, or weakneſs; and that is more than you can ſay.

DIALOGUE XVIII.

CARDINAL RICHLIEU AND CHANCELLOR OXENSTIERNE.

The difference between a miniſter who acts through pride, and one who acts for the love of his country.

RICHLIEU.

THERE has been no miniſter in Europe like me ſince my death.

OXENSTIERNE.

No; none has had the authority you were poſſeſſed of.

RICHLIEU.

You miſtake me, I ſpeak of genius for government; and I may, without vanity, ſay of myſelf, as I would of another in my place, that I left not my equal behind me.

OXENSTIERNE.

When you talk thus, do you conſider that

that I was neither cit nor yeoman; and that I dealt as much in politics as another?

RICHLIEU.

You! 'tis true you gave ſome advice to your king; but he undertook nothing but upon the treaties he made with France; that is to ſay, with me.

OXENSTIERNE.

True; but I engaged him to enter into thoſe treaties.

RICHLIEU.

I had intelligence of facts from father Joſeph; and then I took my meaſures by what Charnace had occaſion more nearly to obſerve.

OXENSTIERNE.

Your father Joſeph was a whimſical monk: as for Charnace, he was a good negotiator; but, without me, nothing had ever been done. The great Guſtavus at firſt ſtood in need of every thing, and was forced to be obliged to France for money; but afterwards he beat the Bavarians and Imperialiſts, and retrieved the Proteſtant party through all Germany. Had he lived after the battle of Lutzen, he would have greatly embarraſſed France itſelf, already alarmed at his progreſs, and would have been the principal power in

Europe. You now repented, but too late, your having aſſiſted him; nay, you were even ſuſpected of being acceſſory to his death.

RICHLIEU.

I am as innocent of it as you.

OXENSTIERNE.

I believe it. But it was a ſad thing that nobody could die in good time for you, without your being immediately believed the author of his death. Now that ſuſpicion could proceed from nothing but the idea you had given of yourſelf by the main tenour of your conduct, in which you ſacrificed, without ſcruple, the life of men to your own greatneſs.

RICHLIEU.

That policy is neceſſary in ſome certain caſes.

OXENSTIERNE.

Its neceſſity was always doubted by honeſt men.

RICHLIEU.

That is what you never doubted more than myſelf; but, after all, what ſo mighty feats have you done in Europe; you, who are vain enough to compare your miniſtry with mine? You were counſellor to a petty barbarous

barbarous king, to a Goth, captain of banditti, and in pay of the king of France, to whom I was miniſter.

OXENSTIERNE.

My maſter's crown was not equal to your maſter's: but that is what conſtitutes both Guſtavus's glory and mine. We came out of a wild and barren country, without troops, without artillery, without money: we diſciplined our ſoldiers, formed officers, vanquiſhed the triumphant armies of the Imperialiſts, changed the face of Europe, and left behind us generals who taught the art of war to all the great men of their time.

RICHLIEU.

There is ſome truth in what you ſay: but, to hear you, one would think you had been as great a general as Guſtavus.

OXENSTIERNE.

Not ſo great, but I underſtood the art of war; and that I ſufficiently ſhewed after my maſter's death.

RICHLIEU.

Had you not Tortenſon, Bannier, and the duke of Weimar, on whom depended every thing?

OXENSTIERNE.

I was not only employed in negotiations

for maintaining the league; I aſſiſted alſo at all the councils of war; and thoſe great men will tell you, that I had the principal ſhare in all thoſe glorious campaigns.

RICHLIEU.

Probably you was in the council, when the battle of Norlinguen was loſt, which demoliſhed the league.

OXENSTIERNE.

I was in the council: but 'tis the duke of Weimar's buſineſs to anſwer for that battle, which he loſt. When it was loſt, I ſupported the diſpirited party. The Swediſh army continued in a foreign country, where it ſubſiſted by my reſources. It was I who formed by my cares a little conquered kingdom, which the duke of Weimar would have preſerved had he lived, and which you baſely uſurped after his death. You have ſeen me in France ſeeking aſſiſtance for my maſter, without troubling my head about your haughtineſs, which would have hurt ~~your~~ maſter's intereſt, had not I been more moderate, and more zealous for my country than you were for yours. You rendered yourſelf odious to your nation: I was the darling and glory of mine. I returned to the wild rocks whence I came. I died there

in

in peace, and all Europe now rings with my name as it did with yours. I had neither your dignities, riches, nor power; nor your poets nor orators to flatter me. I have nothing on my ſide but the good opinion of the Swedes, and that of all ſenſible readers of hiſtory and negotiation. I acted according to my religion againſt the Catholic Imperialiſts, who ever ſince the battle of Prague tyrannized over all Germany. You, (like a falſe prieſt) by our means retrieved the Proteſtants, and cruſhed the Catholics in Germany. Now judge of the difference between us.

RICHLIEU.

This was an inconvenience that could not be avoided, without leaving Europe entirely in the thraldom of the houſe of Auſtria, which was aiming at univerſal monarchy: but, after all, I cannot forbear laughing, to ſee a chancellor give himſelf out for a brave general.

OXENSTIERNE.

I do not pretend to have been a general, but to have been very ſerviceable to the generals in the councils of war. I leave to you the glory of having appeared on horſeback in arms, and in a trooper's dreſs at the

paſs of Suſa. Nay, they ſay you had yourſelf drawn at Richlieu on horſeback, with a buff-coat, a ſcarf, plumes, and a commander's ſtaff.

RICHLIEU.

Your reproaches grow very ſatirical. Farewel.

DIALOGUE XIX.

CARDINAL RICHLIEU AND CARDINAL MAZARIN.

The characters of theſe two miniſters, and the difference between true and falſe policy.

RICHLIEU.

SO you are come here, lord Julius! They ſay you governed France after me. How have you done? Have you compleatly united Europe againſt the houſe of Auſtria? Have you overthrown the Hugonot party which I had weakened? In a word, have you humbled and weakened the great men?

MAZA-

MAZARIN.

You had begun theſe things; but I had many other difficulties to deal with: I had a ſtormy regency to weather.

RICHLIEU.

A king who will not apply himſelf, and is jealous of the very miniſter that ſerves him, gives much more trouble in the cabinet, than the weakneſs and confuſion of a regency. You had a pretty ſteady queen, and under whom affairs might be more eaſily managed than under a crabbed king, who was ever exaſperated againſt me by ſome growing favourite. Such a prince can neither govern himſelf, nor will he ſuffer others to govern. One muſt ſerve him whether he will or no, and does it not, but by running daily the greateſt hazards. My life was made unhappy by him of whom I held all my authority. You know that of all the princes who thwarted the ſiege of Rochelle, the king, my maſter, was he that gave me moſt trouble. I gave, however, the mortal blow to the Hugonot party, which had ſo many places of ſtrength, and ſo many formidable heads. I carried the war into the heart of the houſe of Auſtria. The world will never forget the revolt of Catalonia;

the impenetrable ſecreſy with which Portugal prepared to ſhake off the unjuſt yoke of the Spaniards; Holland ſupported by our alliance in a long war againſt the ſame power; all the allies of the North, of the empire, and of Italy, attached to me perſonally, as to a man incapable of failing them; and then at home the great men brought within the bounds of their duty. I found them intractable, glorying in their cabals againſt all thoſe to whom the king committed his authority, and thinking themſelves obliged to obey the king himſelf only ſo far as he bribed them to it, by gratifying their ambition, and by giving them a boundleſs power in their reſpective governments.

MAZARIN.

As for me, I was a ſtranger; every thing was againſt me; I had nothing to truſt to but my own induſtry. I begun with inſinuating myſelf into the queen's favour: I found means to remove the perſons who had her ear: I defended myſelf againſt the cabals of the courtiers, againſt the furious parliament, againſt the Fronde, a party ſpirited up by a factious cardinal, jealous of my glory; in ſhort, againſt a prince who was every year crowned with freſh laurels, and who employed

ployed the reputation of his victories only to deſtroy me with the more authority: ſo many enemies did I ſcatter. Twice was I expelled the kingdom; twice did I re-enter it in triumph. During my very abſence, 'twas I who governed the ſtate. I drove the cardinal de Retz as far as Rome; I obliged the prince of Conde to flee into Flanders; in fine, I concluded a glorious peace, and left a young king, when I died, in a condition to give law to Europe. All this was done by the help of my genius, ſo fertile in expedients, to my dexterity in negotiation, and to the art I had of keeping men always big with ſome new expectation. But obſerve one thing, I never ſpilt one drop of blood.

RICHLIEU.

No, you were weak, and too fearful to do it.

MAZARIN.

Fearful! did not I cauſe the three princes to be clapt up in Vincennes? The prince had to linger all the while in his confinement.

RICHLIEU.

I could lay any wager, that you had neither courage to detain him, nor to deliver him; and that your perplexity was the true cauſe of the length of his confinement. But

to

to come to the point; for my part, I did ſhed ſome blood; but it was neceſſary, in order to humble the pride of the grandees, ever ready to riſe in rebellion. It is not very ſurpriſing, that a man who ſuffered all the courtiers and officers of the army to reaſſume their ancient haughtineſs, put none to death in ſo feeble a government.

MAZARIN.

A government is by no means feeble, when it compaſſes its ends by ingenuity without cruelty. 'Tis better to be a fox than a lion or a tyger.

RICHLIEU.

It is not cruelty to puniſh the guilty, whoſe ill examples might be productive of others. Impunity never failing to bring on civil wars, it would have annihilated the king's authority, ruined the ſtate, coſt the blood of I don't know how many thouſands; whereas I eſtabliſhed peace and authority, by ſacrificing a few guilty perſons; beſides, I never had any other enemies than thoſe of the ſtate.

MAZARIN.

That was becauſe you thought yourſelf the ſtate. You took it for granted, that no body

body could be a true Frenchman, without being in your pay.

RICHLIEU.

Did you ſpare the firſt prince of the blood, when you thought he would oppoſe your intereſts? In order to be in favour at court, was it not neceſſary to be a Mazarin? I never carried ſuſpicions and diſtruſt to a greater height than you did. We both ſerved the ſtate; and while we ſerved it, each of us wanted to govern every thing; you endeavoured to overcome your enemies by craft and cowardly artifice; I again overthrew mine by open force; and I ſeriouſly believed that they ſought my deſtruction, with no other view than to plunge France once more into the calamities and confuſions out of which I had extricated her with ſo much difficulty. But however, I always kept my word; I was a ſincere friend, or an open foe; I ſupported my maſter's authority with reſolution and dignity; thoſe I uſed ſeverely had only themſelves to blame that they were not loaded with favours: I made all manner of advances towards them: I loved, I courted merit the moment I diſcovered it. All I wanted, was, that they ſhould not thwart my government, which I believed neceſſary

to

to the ſafety of France. Had they been willing to ſerve the king according to their talents, according to my orders, they had been my friends.

MAZARIN.

Say rather your ſervants; well paid ſervants indeed: but they muſt have put up with a maſter, jealous, imperious, implacable in whatever touched his jealouſy.

RICHLIEU.

To be jealous and imperious are great faults, I muſt confeſs; but how many qualities had I, which ſpeak an extenſive genius, and an elevated ſoul? As for you, lord Julius, you betrayed nothing but cunning and covetouſneſs; you did much worſe to the French than ſhedding their blood. You corrupted their manners. You made probity unfaſhionable and ridiculous. I had but checked the pride of the great; you broke their ſpirit, degraded the nobility, confounded all ranks, and rendered all favours venal; you feared merit; there was no getting in with you, but by diſcovering a low, complying temper of mind, capable of the moſt villainous intrigues. You even had never a true knowledge of men; you could believe nothing but evil; all elſe to you was but mere

mere fiction: none were for your purpoſe but tricking ſpirits, who ſhould over-reach thoſe with whom you had occaſion to negotiate, or trading men, who ſhould make you money of every thing. And ſo your name remains contemned and abhorred: on the contrary, I am aſſured that mine daily grows more honourable with the French nation.

MAZARIN.

Your inclinations were more noble than mine, and you had more grandeur in you; but you had withal a certain tincture of vanity and falſhood. For my part, I avoided that prepoſterous grandeur, as a ridiculous vanity: you had always about you poets, orators, and comedians: you were yourſelf a poet, orator, and a rival to Corneille: you compoſed books of devotion, without being devout: you would needs be a Jack of all trades, play the gallant, excel in every way. You ſwallowed down the praiſes of every author. Is there in Sorbonne a door, or a pane of glaſs, where you have not ſtuck up your arms?

RICHLIEU.

Your ſatire is pretty keen, and has ſomething of a foundation in it. I am very ſenſible

ſible that true glory ought to ſpurn certain honours, which groſs-judging vanity purſues; and that one diſhonours himſelf by too eagerly deſiring to be honoured: but after all, I loved learning; I excited emulation to reſtore it. As for you, you never minded either the church, learning, arts, or virtue. Need we wonder, that ſo hateful a conduct raiſed all the grandees of the ſtate, and all honeſt men, againſt ſuch a foreigner?

MAZARIN.

You talk of nothing but your chimerical heroiſm: but for the well governing of a ſtate, neither generoſity, honeſty, nor goodneſs of heart, are in queſtion. The thing requiſite, is a genius fruitful in expedients, impenetrable in deſigns, that is in nothing ruled by its paſſions, but in every thing by its intereſt, that is inexhauſtible in reſources to overcome difficulties.

RICHLIEU.

True policy conſiſts in never having occaſion to deceive, and in always ſucceeding by honeſt means. 'Tis only through weakneſs, and for want of knowing the right way, that one ſtrikes into by-paths, and has recourſe to cunning. True policy con-

ſiſts in not amuſing one's ſelf with ſo many expedients, but in chuſing directly, by a clear and diſtinct view, that which is beſt, when compared with others. This fertility of expedients proceeds leſs from extent and ſtrength of genius, than from a want of ſtrength, and juſtneſs of judgment. In ſhort, true policy conſiſts in being ſenſible that at long-run the greateſt of all reſources in affairs is the univerſal reputation of probity. You are never ſafe when you get none in your intereſt but fools or knaves: but when the character of your probity is eſtabliſhed, both good and bad will confide in you. Your enemies fear you greatly, and your friends love you in the ſame manner. As for you, with all your Proteus appearance, you never could make yourſelf beloved, eſteemed, or feared. I own you were a great mountebank, but not a great man.

MAZARIN.

You ſpeak of me as if I had been a coward: I ſhewed in Spain, while I carried arms there, that I did not fear death. This alſo appeared in the dangers to which I was expoſed during the civil wars of France. As for you, 'tis well known that you were afraid of your own ſhadow, and fancied that there

there was ſome ruffian under your bed, ready to ſtab you. But perhaps you had thoſe panics only at certain ſeaſons.

RICHLIEU.

Ridicule me as much as you pleaſe. For my part, I ſhall always do juſtice to your good qualities. You did not want courage in war: but you wanted courage, ſteadineſs and greatneſs of ſoul in the management of affairs. You were pliable only through weakneſs, and for want of fixed principles in your mind. You had not reſolution to deny a man to his face, which made you promiſe too eaſily, and afterwards elude all your promiſes by a thouſand captious evaſions. Theſe evaſions, however, were palpable, and unavailing; they ſcreened you only becauſe you were clothed with authority; and an honeſt man would rather you had told him plainly: I was in the wrong to promiſe you; and I find it out of my power to perform what I promiſed, than to have added, to the breach of promiſe, little ſhuffling ſubterfuges to play upon the unfortunate. It is not enough to be valiant in war, if one is weak in the cabinet. Many princes, capable of dying like heroes, have made them-

themſelves infamous, by their ſoftneſs in the management of affairs.

MAZARIN.

It is an eaſy matter to talk thus: but when a man has ſo many people to pleaſe, he muſt amuſe as he can; one has not favours to beſtow on all, yet all expect them; ſo that we are obliged to feed them up with vain hopes.

RICHLIEU.

We may give a great many people reaſon to hope, but we muſt deceive no body, for every one in his turn may meet with his reward, and even advance himſelf, upon ſome occaſion or other, beyond what might have been imagined. As for thoſe who conceive unreaſonable and ridiculous hopes, they deceive themſelves. 'Tis not you who deceive them, but themſelves; and they have nothing to blame but their own folly. But to promiſe to their faces, and laugh at your promiſe as ſoon as their backs are turned, is a thing unworthy an honeſt man, and deſtructive to the reputation of buſineſs itſelf. As for me, I maintained and encreaſed the king's authority, without having recourſe to any ſuch wretched methods. The fact is ſelf-evident, and you diſpute with one who was a living inſtance of the falſeneſs of your maxims.

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